BALLADS AND BALLAD POETRY

THE HAWTHORNE CLASSICS

BALLADS

AND BALLAD POETRY

EDITED BY

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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS book deals with the ballad as a kind of poetry, with as little as possible of antiquarian or linguistic or even literary detail. In pursuing this end I have found myself especially aided by Mr. John Geddie's book on "The Balladists" in the Famous Scots Series. He seems to me to have expressed the real quality of the ballads better than most who have published on the subject, and I have been a good deal guided by his ideas in my selections for the first part of this book. Like everybody else who deals with ballads, I am under great obligations to Francis James Child. The text of the old ballads in the first part comes always from his earlier collections, although I have made emendations from different sources.

E. E. H., JR.

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INTRODUCTION

THE study of ballads is a study in very plain and simple poetry. The word *ballad* is sometimes loosely used, but generally people understand by it a poem written to be sung and telling a story. There are many poems written to be sung, hymns, for instance, and all kinds of everyday songs, but these we do not call ballads. There are many poems which tell stories, but are written without any idea of being sung, like "Evangeline," and these we do not call ballads either. But in the early days of literature poetry is commonly sung, or recited in something of a sing-song way, and it generally tells a story because in the early days people are more interested in stories than in other forms of poetry. As people grow more and more cultivated, their poems are written down so that they no longer have the character that comes from being written for music, and as time goes on people have wider interests in literature and care for other things in poetry than stories. So ballads are common only in the early days of any literature, or if in later days, among people who do not do much reading. But

later poets often write poems of the same general character as the old ballads. So this volume is made up of old ballads, ballads written by poets of later time in the spirit of the old ballads, and also of longer poems that have much of the ballad character about them.

There are ballads in almost every literature, although in the older languages they are rarely found now because, as a rule, they were never written down, and so have been forgotten. In this way the oldest English ballads are mostly lost; they were sung so long ago that hardly a remnant of them is to be found, except as they have been preserved in other more ambitious pieces of literature. Later, English ballads were written and sung in a time when there was a more ambitious literature, but by people who probably knew little about books and who had their own popular poetry which suited them better. Our two Robin Hood ballads,[1] and "The Hunting of the Cheviot," and "The Battle of Otterbourne" are English ballads of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively. But the best of English ballads are Scotch, — if it be not a bull to say so, — not Highland Scotch, which is Gaelic, but Lowland Scotch, which is almost the same language as English with differences arising from the political division of the two peoples.

[1] All the ballads mentioned in the introduction will be found among the selections following.

Just as English literature down to the union of the two nations is richer and finer than Scotch literature, so Scotch ballad-poetry of the same time is richer and finer than the English ballad-poetry. The greater number of the old ballads in the following pages are Scotch, and it does not require great discrimination to see how much better they are than the Robin Hood ballads, which are English. There is a finer spirit and character to them.

There are more Scotch ballads than English; in fact, there is an immense mass of them, some very old and some as late as the seventeenth century. But although there are so many, they may fall mostly into three rough divisions. Some are called mythological, being made on the remnant of old superstitions, some are historical or traditionary, being made about real events, and some are romantic, usually what we should call love-stories. Some have more than one characteristic. Of the first kind in our collection are "True Thomas," the tale of the harper who was snatched off to fairy land, "The Young Tamlane," where the fairy lover of Janet turns out to have been her old playmate, "Kempion," in which the king's son rescues the lovely lady who had been changed into a horrible monster, "The Demon Lover," which tells the fate of the woman who had once loved a demon in human shape. Then come the romantic ballads, generally love-stories, first those

which have something of the element of fairy about them, like "Binnorie" or "The Gay Gosshawk," and then those which have something more of a traditional character. Thus "The Dowie Dens of Yarrow" was evidently made on some desperate duel, or, perhaps, as the song itself says, a murder. The ballad of which "Fair Helen" was a part was probably made on some well-known event in those violent days. Lastly are the purely traditional ballads, some of them running far back, like "Sir Patrick Spens," which is thought to tell of a disaster of the year 1281; some of them quite modern like "Kinmont Willie," which describes a real occurrence in the fierce border fighting of the sixteenth century. Here also belong the Robin Hood ballads, which originated in England, and those two very famous historical ballads, that of "The Battle of Otterbourne," which took place in 1388, and "The Hunting of the Cheviot," which though confused as to the facts was probably made on the same event.

As we read these old ballads we easily get to recognize what we may call their ballad character. They are all in stanza; that was because they were sung. They are all of very simple substance; they tell their story with very little description and with note of only the most striking details. Their style is direct without much figure, and we may add that their meter is commonly

free and even irregular, which comes of their being passed from mouth to mouth among plain people who were not particular about literary refinements. They all have certain mannerisms. Some are mere expressions, like "up and spake," "a rose but barely three." One is frequent repetition of adjectives and epithets, the lady is always fair and the Douglas is always doughty; and also of lines and even whole stanzas. The constant repetition of a line is called a refrain, as in "Edward, Edward," and in "Binnorie," where it has not been printed with each verse. They all have dialogue, often brought in abruptly and without any explanation of who are the speakers. Sometimes the whole ballad is in dialogue; sometimes even it is the utterance of a single speaker. They do not have the beauties of diction and the elegancies of style that we often find in our poets, but they certainly have a charm of their own.

Such a charm have these old ballads, written long since by nobody knows who, that modern poets in later years have been tempted to try to gain the same effects. The modern literary ballad, however, is not generally meant to be sung. Scott's "Lochinvar" can be sung and often is, but "The Eve of Saint John" would be far too long, and so would most modern ballads. Walter Scott, who was one of the first to feel the desire to rival the old balladists, usually took the same kind of subject that they would have taken. But

poets after him have exercised a free choice. Hood, in "The Dream of Eugene Aram," took the tale of a modern murder, while Rudyard Kipling saw that the border between India and Afghanistan had as much romance in its way as that between England and Scotland. Still, with all differences, the subject and even the treatment are much the same; we may compare that finest of the old ballads, "Sir Patrick Spens," with Longfellow's "Wreck of the Hesperus," and we shall find a number of resemblances, some of which are in real imitation by the later poet of matters of form and some in appreciation of the old ballad spirit.

But if we look at these poems closely, we shall see points which make them different from the old ballads. They are generally much more careful as to rhyme and rhythm and sometimes much more elaborate; thus, "Eugene Aram" has a six-line stanza with two rhymes, which is only found here and there among the old poems, while Rossetti's stanza in "Sister Helen" is more complicated than the usual ballad-stanza, and his variation of the refrain is something we never find in the old ballads carried to such an extent. Tennyson, while preserving the spirit and character of the old poem in "The Revenge," has entirely given up the stanzaic structure and the regularity of rhythm. And in any ballad by a modern poet we shall be likely to find a greater fullness of

figure and description than is to be found in the older poetry.

Such poems, however, may rightly be called ballads, even though they differ in some respects from the older ballads. But there are other poems which are also inspired by the older poetry, and which yet would hardly be called ballads themselves. Thus Macaulay's "Battle of Lake Regillus," though otherwise full of ballad spirit, is too long for a ballad and much too full and figured in expression. Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" was certainly inspired by the ballads, but it is too elaborate in structure and expression to be called a ballad itself. Scott, who collected many a ballad and also wrote some in imitation of his old favorites, wrote afterward much longer poems which have plenty of ballad character, though we should not think of calling them ballads. "Marmion" is far too detailed in structure and expression to be thought of as a ballad. Yet the ballad spirit is observable in all these poems, the ballad way of putting things.

That is, on the whole, the thing we want to get, — the ballad spirit. Let us feel that strongly and we shall appreciate these old poems and the new alike. Let us feel the sentiment and the emotion of the ballad, its simplicity and its strength, — let us really know it and feel it so that we shall get its true virtue. It may be found in greater or less degree in all the poems in this

book, however different they may be. Indeed, this very difference will be the thing that allows this fine common quality to be the more easily perceived and enjoyed. Let us put some of them together, and see if we can detect it.

We must not choose those that are too much alike, for then we may be led away by some minor resemblance which is not the main thing. Thus we might read "True Thomas" and "The Young Tamlane," and we should say that the ballad spirit was wild and fanciful and superstitious, that it was the spirit of magic and enchantment and faerie, that the ballad was a fairy tale in verse. Or we might compare "Edom o' Gordon" and "Kinmont Willie," and if so, we should be led to say something very different; for these poems are wild enough, but there is no fancy nor superstition in them, no magic nor enchantment. These are not fairy tales at all: they are realistic, almost matters of fact. We should say, if we read only these and others of the same kind, that the ballad spirit was the fresh and free spirit of lawless daring and reckless adventure, that it was the spirit of border chivalry and of the mosstrooping knighthood. Or we might compare "The Gay Gosshawk" and "The Douglas Tragedy," and we should say that the ballad spirit was the spirit of high-pitched romance, the spirit of ideal passion. The maiden who lay living in her coffin, unmoved while they dropped hot lead upon her

breast; the bride who saw her brothers all cut down on her wedding-day, and died in the arms of her dead husband before the next morning, — these are examples of a strained, exaggerated, fantastic passion that is unlike the enchantment of fairy lovers or the adventure of the marchman. Yet all these are true ballads, we must feel surely, and not ballads only because they can be sung. They are ballads for that reason, — because they have the ballad character, — but also for another, that they have the ballad spirit and quality.

What, then, can we say of this spirit as we see it in the enchanting mystery of the fairy ballads, in the intense passion of the romances, in the daring vigor of the border songs? We may feel it, and know it when we feel it, and yet not be able to describe it; and even if so, we do the main thing. Still we want, if possible, to be able to say what it is. Shall we say that it is the tone of a free and heightened expression of the simpler and the nobler human passions, touched always with a spirit of strangeness and adventure? Will such a formula as that help us to feel the especial charm of the old ballads, and of the new, and of the longer poems like ballads? If it does so, well and good; if not, we must try for something better. Read one and another poem, some that are alike and some that are different, and try to feel each strongly. Then, if we like, let us try to state exactly just what is the impression we have,

not of one or another, but of all; what it is which in all the differences each one has. If we can do this, we shall have learned a valuable lesson in literary appreciation, and even if we can not, we shall have made a step toward it. It is not the only step to take, some tell us it is not the shortest way to go; but a step it is, and in a direction which will bring us where we want to be.

As our interest in these ballads is literary and not linguistic, we present them in modern spelling. To those who love them in their old form, much is thereby lost; but for those who do not know them well a real difficulty is done away with. In order, however, to give some idea of the old versions, "The Battle of Otterbourne" is given in the ancient form. It may be studied out best by reading it aloud but it is rather hard work. Those who wish to read the others in their original form should consult the great collection of Professor Child, "English and Scotch Ballads."

PART ONE

THE OLD BALLADS

TRUE THOMAS

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank ;
A ferlie[1] he spied with his ee ;
And there he saw a lady bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon tree.

Her skirt was of the grass-green silk,
Her mantle of the velvet fine ;
At ilka[2] tett[3] of her horse's mane,
Hung fifty silver bells and nine.

True Thomas he pulled off his cap,
And louted low down to his knee ;
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven !
For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said,
"That name does not belong to me ;
I'm but the Queen of fair Elfland,
That hither am come to visit thee !

[1] a wonder. [2] every. [3] lock.

"Harp and carp,[1] Thomas," she said,
"Harp and carp along with me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your body I will be!"

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunton me!"
Syne[2] he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon tree.

"Now ye maun go with me," she said,
"True Thomas, ye maun go with me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe as may chance to be."

She's mounted on her milk-white steed,
She's ta'en True Thomas up behind;
And aye, whene'er her bridle rang,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rode on, and farther on,
The steed flew swifter than the wind;
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down now, Thomas," she said,
"And lean your head upon my knee;
Light down, and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

[1] sing: the words are imperatives. [2] then.

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few enquires.

"And see ye not that broad broad road,
That stretches o'er the lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

"And see ye not yon bonny road,
That winds about the ferny brae?
That is the way to fair Elfland,
Where you and I this night maun gae.

"But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For if ye speak word in Elfin land,
Ye'll ne'er win back to your own countrye!

O they rode on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers abune[1] the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of a sea.

It was mirk mirk night, there was no stern-light,
And they waded through red blood to the knee;
For a' the blood that's shed on earth,
Runs through the springs o' that countrye.

[1] above, from the old form *aboven*.

Syne they came to a garden green,
And she pulled an apple from a tree —
"Take this for thy wages, True Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that can never lie!"

"My tongue is my own," True Thomas he said,
"A goodly gift ye would give to me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell
At fair or tryst where I may be.

"I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace of fair ladye." —
"Now hold thy peace!" the lady said,
"For as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green;
And till seven years were gone and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

THE YOUNG TAMLANE

"O! I forbid ye, maidens all,
That bind in snood your hair,
To come or go by Carterhaugh,
For young Tamlane is there."

But up then spake her, fair Janet
The fairest of all her kin:
"I'll come and go to Carterhaugh,
And ask no leave of him."

Janet has kilted her green kirtle,
A little abune her knee;
And she has braided her yellow hair,
A little abune her bree.[1]

And when she came to Carterhaugh,
She gaed[2] beside the well;
And then she found his steed standing,
But away was himsell.

She had not pulled a red, red rose
A rose but barely three:
Till up and starts a wee wee man
At Lady Janet's knee.

Says — "Why pull ye the rose, Janet?
What gars[3] ye break the tree?
Or why come ye to Carterhaugh,
Withouten leave of me?"

Says — "Carterhaugh it is my own,
My daddie gave it me;
I'll come and go to Carterhaugh,
And ask no leave of thee."

When she came to her father's hall
She looked so wan and pale
They thought she had dreed[4] some sore sickness
So much she seemed to ail.

[1] brow.
[2] preterite of *gae* or *go*.
[3] makes.
[4] suffered.

She prinked herself and prinned herself
By the ae[1] light of the moon.
And she's away to Carterhaugh
To speak with young Tamlane.

And when she came to Carterhaugh,
She gaed beside the well ;
And there she saw the steed standing,
But away was himsell.

She had not pulled a double rose,
A rose but only two,
When up there started young Tamlane,
Says, "Lady, thou pulls no mo ! "

"The truth ye'll tell to me, Tamlane,
A word ye maunna lie ;
Gin[2] e'er ye was in holy chapel,
Or sained[3] in Christentie ? "

"The truth I'll tell to thee, Janet,
A word I winna lie ;
I was ta'en to the good church-door,
And sained as well as thee.

"Randolph, Earl Murray, was my sire,
Dunbar, Earl March, is thine ;
We loved when we were children small,
Which yet you well may mind.

[1] one ; here, single. [2] if. [3] blessed.

"When I was a boy just turned of nine,
My uncle sent for me,
To hunt, and hawk, and ride with him,
And keep him companie.

"There came a wind out of the north,
A sharp wind and a snell;[1]
And a dead sleep came over me,
And from my horse I fell;

"The Queen of Fairies kept me
In yon green hill to dwell;
And I'm a fairy lyth and limb;
Fair lady, view me well.

"And never would I tire, Janet,
In Elfish-land to dwell;
But aye, at every seven years,
They pay the teind[2] to hell;
And I'm so fat and fair of flesh,
I fear 'twill be mysell!

"This night is Hallowe'en, Janet,
The morn is Hallowday;
And gin ye dare your true love win,
Ye have no time to stay.

"The night it is good Hallowe'en,
When fairy folk will ride;

[1] keen. [2] tithe.

And they that would their true love win,
At Miles Cross they must bide."

"But how shall I thee ken, Tamlane,
And how shall I thee know,
Among so many unearthly knights,
The like I never saw?"

"The first company that passes by
Say no, and let them go;
The next company that passes by,
Say no, and do right so;
The third company that passes by,
Then I'll be one of tho'.

"First let pass the black, Janet,
And syne[1] let pass the brown,
But grip ye to the milk-white steed,
And pull the rider down.

"For I ride on the milk-white steed,
And aye nearest the town:
Because I was a christened Knight
They gave me that renown.

"My right hand will be gloved, Janet,
My left hand will be bare,
And these the tokens I give thee;
No doubt I will be there.

[1] afterward, then.

"They'll turn me in your arms, Janet,
An adder and a snake;
But hold me fast, let me not pass,
Gin ye would be my maik.[1]

"They'll turn me in your arms, Janet,
An adder and an aske;
They'll turn me in your arms, Janet,
A bale that burns fast.

"And next, they'll shape me in your arms,
A rod, but and[2] an ell;
But hold me fast, nor let me go,
As you do love me well.

"They'll shape me in your arms, Janet,
A dove, but and a swan:
And last they'll shape me in your arms
The true form of a man:
Cast your green mantle over me—
I'll be myself again."—

Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,
As fair Janet, in her green mantle,
To Miles Cross she did gae.

Betwixt the hours of twelve and one
A north wind tore the bent;

[1] mate. [2] and also.

And straight she heard strange elritch sounds
Upon the wind which went.

About the dead hour o' the night
She heard the bridles ring;
And Janet was as glad o' that
As any earthly thing.

Will o' the Wisp before them went,
Sent forth a twinkling light;
And soon she saw the Fairy band
All riding in her sight.

And first gaed by the black, black steed,
And then gaed by the brown;
But fast she gripped the milk-white steed,
And pulled the rider down.

She pulled him frae the milk-white steed,
And let the bridle fall;
And up there rose an elritch cry;
"He's one among us all!"

They shaped him in fair Janet's arms
An aske, but and an adder;
She held him fast in every shape,
To be her own true lover.

They shaped him in her arms at last
The true form of a man,
She cast her mantle over him,
And so her true love won.

Up then spake the Queen o' Fairies,
Out of a bush of broom :
"She that has borrowed young Tamlane,
Has gotten a stately groom ! "

Up then spake the Queen o' Fairies,
Out of a bush of rye :
"She's ta'en away the bonniest knight
In all my companye !

"But had I kenned, Tamlane," she says,
"A lady would borrow thee,
I would hae ta'en out thy two gray e'en,
Put in two e'en o' tree ! [1]

"Had I but kenned, Tamlane," she says,
"Before ye came frae home,
I would hae ta'en out your heart of flesh,
Put in a heart o' stone !

"Had I but had the wit yestreen
That I hae coft this day,
I'd hae paid my teind seven times to hell,
Ere you'd been won away ! "

[1] wood.

KEMPION

"Come here, come here, ye cannot choose,[1]
And lay your head low on my knee ;
The heaviest weird I will you read,
That ever was read to gay ladye,

"O mickle dolor shall ye dree,
And aye the salt seas o'er ye swim ;
And far more dolor shall ye dree
On Estmere crags, when ye them climb.

"I weird ye to a fiery beast
And relieved shall ye never be,
Till Kempion, the kingis son,
Come to the crag, and thrice kiss thee."

O mickle dolor did she dree,
And aye the saut seas o'er she swam ;
And far more dolor did she dree
On Estmere Crag, when up she clamb.

And aye she cried for Kempion,
Gin he would but come to her hand :—
Now word has gane to Kempion,
That siccan[2] a beast was in the land.

"Now by my sooth," said Kempion,
"This fiery beast I'll gang and see."
"And by my sooth," said Segramour,
"My ae brither, I'll gang with thee."

[1] This verse and the two following are spoken by the lady's step-mother.

[2] such.

Then builded have they a bonny boat,
And they have set her to the sea ;
But a mile afore they reached the shore,
Around them she garred the red fire flee.

"O Segramour, keep the boat afloat,
And let her not the land o'er near ;
For the wicked beast will sure go mad
And set fire to all the land and more."

Syne has he bent an arblast bow,
And aimed an arrow at her head ;
And swore, if she didna quit the land,
With that same shaft to shoot her dead.

"Out o' my stythe [1] I winna rise,
(And it is not for the awe of thee)
Till Kempion, the kingis son,
Come to the crag and thrice kiss me."

He's louted him o'er the dizzy crag,
And gi'en the monster kisses one.
Awa she gaed, and again she came,
The fieriest beast that ever was seen.

"Out of my stythe I winna rise,
(And not for all thy bow nor thee),
Till Kempion, the kingis son,
Come to the crag and thrice kiss me."

[1] sty.

He's louted him o'er the Estmere Crag,
And he has gi'en her kisses twa ;
Awa she gaed and again she came,
The fieriest beast that ever you saw.

"Out o' my stythe I winna rise,
Nor quit my den for the fear o' thee,
Till Kempion, the kingis son,
Come to the crag and thrice kiss me."

He's louted him o'er the lofty crag,
And he has gi'en her kisses three ;
Awa she gaed and again she came
The loveliest lady e'er could be.

"An' by my sooth," says Kempion,
"My ain true love ! (for this is she,)
They surely had a heart o' stone,
Could put thee to this misery.

"O was it wer-wolf in the wood,
Or was it mermaid in the sea,
Or wicked man, or vile woman,
My own true love, that mis-shaped thee?"

"It was no wer-wolf in the wood,
Nor was it mermaid in the sea ;
But it was my wicked stepmother,
And wae and weary may she be !"

"O a heavier weird light her upon
Than ever fell on vile woman!
Her hair sall grow rough, an' her teeth grow lang,
An' on her four feet maun she gang."

THE DEMON LOVER

"O, where have ye been, my long-lost love,
This long seven years and more?"
"O, I'm come to seek my former vows
Ye granted me before."—

"O, hold your tongue of your former vows,
For they'll breed bitter strife;
O, hold your tongue of your former vows,
For I am become a wife."

He turned him right and round about,
And the teer blinded his ee;
"I would never have trodden on Irish ground
If it had not been for thee.

"I might have had a king's daughter
Far, far beyond the sea,
I might have had a king's daughter,
Had it not been for love of thee."

"If ye might have had a king's daughter,
Yourself ye have to blame;
Ye might have taken the king's daughter,
For ye kenned that I was nane."

"O false be the vows of womankind,
But fair is their false bodye;
I would never have trodden on Irish ground
Had it not been for love of thee."

"If I was to leave my husband dear,
And my two babes also,
O where is it ye would take me to,
If I with thee should go?"

"I have seven ships upon the sea,
The eighth brought me to land,
Wi' four-and-twenty bold mariners,
And music on every hand."

She has taken up her two little babes,
Kiss'd them both cheek and chin;
"O fare ye well, my own two babes,
For I'll never see you again."

She set her foot upon the ship,
No mariners could she behold;
But the sails were of the taffetie,
And the masts of the beaten gold.

"O how do you love the ship?" he said,
"O how do you love the sea?
And how do you love the bold mariners
That wait upon thee and me?"

"O I do love the ship," she said,
"And I do love the sea;

But wo to the dim mariners
That nowhere I can see ! "

They had not sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When dismal grew his countenance,
And drumlie[1] grew his ee.

The masts that were like the beaten gold,
Bent not on the heaving seas ;
The sails that were of the taffetie
Fill'd not in the east land breeze.

They had not sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
Until she espied his cloven hoof,
And she wept right bitterlye.

" O hold your tongue of your weeping," he says :
" Of your weeping now let me be ;
I will show you how the lilies grow
On the banks of Italy."

" O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
That the sun shines sweetly on ? "
" O yon are the hills o' heaven," he said,
" Where you will never win."

" O what'n a mountain's yon," she said,
" So dreary with frost and snow ? "
" O yon is the mountain of hell," he cried,
" Where you and I must go ! "

[1] troubled.

And aye when she turned her round about,
Aye taller he seemed for to be ;
Until that the tops o' that gallant ship
No taller were than he.

He struck the topmast with his hand,
The foremast with his knee ;
And he broke that gallant ship in twain,
And sank her in the sea.

BINNORIE

There were two sisters sat in a bower ;
Binnorie, O Binnorie ;
There came a knight to be their wooer ;
By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

He courted the eldest with glove and ring,
But he loved the youngest above all thing.

He courted the eldest with broach and knife.
But he loved the youngest above his life.

The eldest she was vexed sair,
And sair she envied her sister fair.

The eldest said to the youngest one,
" Will ye see our father's ships come in?"

She's taken her by the lily-white hand,
And led her down to the river strand.

The youngest stood upon a stone,
The eldest came and pushed her in.

She took her by the middle sma',
And dashed her bonny back to the jaw.

"O sister, sister, reach your hand,
And ye shall be heir of half my land."

"O sister, I'll not reach my hand,
And I'll be heir to all your land.

"Shame fall the hand that I should take,
It's twined[1] me and my world's make."

"O sister, reach me but your glove,
And sweet William shall be your love."

"Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove!
And sweet William shall better be my love.

"Your cherry cheeks and your yellow hair,
Garred me gang maiden ever mair."

Sometimes she sank, and sometimes she swam
Until she came to the miller's dam.

"O father, father, draw your dam!
There's a mermaid or a milk-white swan."

The miller hasted and drew his dam,
And there he found a drowned woman.

[1] separated.

You could not see her yellow hair.
For gold and pearls that were so rare.

You could not see her middle sma',
Her golden girdle was so braw.[1]

A famous harper passing by,
The sweet pale face he chanced to spy.

And when he looked that lady on,
He sighed and made a heavy moan.

He made a harp of her breast bone,
Whose sounds would melt a heart of stone.

The strings he framed of her yellow hair,
Whose notes made sad the listening ear.

He brought it to her father's hall,
And there was the court assembled all.

He laid his harp upon a stone,
And straight it began to play alone.

"O yonder sits my father the king,
And yonder sits my mother the queen.

"And yonder stands my brother Hugh,
And by him my William, sweet and true."

But the last tune the harp played then,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
Was — "Woe to my sister, false Helen!"
By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

[1] fine.

THE GAY GOSSHAWK

"O waly, waly, my gay gosshawk [1]
Gin your feathering be sheen!"
"And waly, waly, my master dear,
Gin ye look pale and lean!

"O have ye tint,[2] at tournament,
Your sword, or yet your spear?
Or mourn ye for the southern lass,
Whom ye may not win[3] near?"

"I have not tint, at tournament,
My sword, nor yet my spear;
But sore I mourn for my true love,
With many a bitter tear.

"But weel's on me, my gay gosshawk,
Ye can both speak and flee;
Ye shall carry a letter to my love,
Bring an answer back to me."

"But how shall I your true love find,
Or how should I her know?
I bear a tongue ne'er with her spake,
An eye that her ne'er saw."

"O well shall ye my true love ken,
So soon as ye her see;
For of all the flowers of fair England,
The fairest flower is she.

[1] A large species of hawk used for hunting wild geese and heron.
[2] lost. [3] go.

"The red, that's on my true love's cheek,
Is like blood-drops on the snaw;
The white, that is on her breast bare,
Like down on the white sea-maw.

"And ever at my love's bower-door
There grows a flowering birch,
And ye maun gang and sing thereon
As she gangs to the church.

"And four-and-twenty fair ladies
Will to the mass repair;
But well may ye my lady ken
The fairest lady there."

Lord William has written a love-letter,
Put it under his pinion gray;
And he is away to southern land
As fast as wings can gae.

And even at the lady's bower
There grew a flowering birch;
And he sat down and sung thereon
As she gaed to the church.

And well he kenned that lady fair
Among her maidens free;
For the flower that springs in May morning
Was not so sweet as she.

He lighted at the lady's gate,
And sat him on a pin;
And sang full sweet the notes of love,
Till all was cosh[1] within.

And first he sang a low, low note
And syne he sang a clear;
And aye the o'erword of the song
Was — "Your love can no win here."

"Feast on, feast on, my maidens all,
The wine flows you among,
While I gang to my shot window
And hear yon bonny bird's song.

"Sing on, sing on, my bonny bird,
The song ye sung yestreen;[2]
For well I ken, by your sweet singing,
Ye are frae my true love sen'."

O first he sang a merry song,
And syne he sang a grave;
And syne he picked his feathers gray
To her the letter gave.

"Have there a letter from Lord William;
He says he's sent ye three;
He canna wait for your love longer,
But for your sake he'll die."

[1] quiet. [2] yesterday evening.

"Go bid him bake his bridal bread,
And brew his bridal ale;
And I shall meet him at Mary's church,
Long, long ere it be stale."

The lady's gone to her chamber,
And a moanful woman was she;
As gin she had taken a sudden brash,[1]
And were about to die.

"A boon, a boon, my father dear,
A boon I beg of thee!"
"Ask not that paughty[2] Scottish lord,
For him you ne'er shall see;

"But for your honest asking else,
Well granted shall it be."
"Then, gin I die in southern land
In Scotland gar bury me.

"And the first church that ye come to,
Ye's gar the mass be sung;
And the next church that ye come to,
Ye's gar the bells be rung.

"And when ye come to St. Mary's church
Ye'll tarry there till night."
And so her father pledged his word,
And so his promise plight.

[1] illness. [2] boastful.

She has taken her to her bigly[1] bower
As fast as she could fare;
And she has drank a sleepy draught
That she had mixed with care.

And pale, pale grew her rosy cheek,
That was so bright of blee,
And she seemed to be as surely dead
As any one could be.

Then spake her cruel step-minnie,
"Take ye the burning lead,
And drop a drop in her bosom
To try if she be dead."

They took a drop of boiling lead,
They dropped it on her breast;
"Alas! alas!" her father cried,
"She's dead without the priest."

She neither chattered with her teeth,
Nor shivered with her chin;
"Alas! alas!" her father cried,
"There is no breath within."

Then up arose her seven brothers,
And hewed to her a bier;
They hewed it from the solid oak,
Laid it o'er with silver clear.

[1] large, roomy.

Then up and gat her seven sisters,
And sewed to her a kell ; [1]
And every stitch that they put on
Sewed to a silver bell.

The first Scotch church that they came to,
They garred the bells be rung ;
The next Scotch church that they came to,
They garred the mass be sung.

But when they came to St. Mary's church,
There stood spearmen all on a raw,
And up and started Lord William,
The chieftain among them a'.

"Set doun, set doun the bier," he said,
"Let me look her upon : "
But as soon as Lord William touched her hand,
Her color began to come.

She brightened like the lily-flower,
Till her pale cheek was gone ;
With rosy cheek, and ruby lip,
She smiled her love upon.

"Give me a chive of your bread, my love,
And one glass of your wine ;
For I have fasted for your love
These weary long days nine.

[1] cap.

"Go home, go home, my seven bold brothers,
Go home and blow your horn!
I trow ye would have gi'en me the skaith,
But I've given you the scorn.

"Commend me to my gray father,
That wished my soul good rest;
But woe be to my cruel step-dame,
Garred burn me on the breast."

"Oh woe to you, you light woman!
An ill death may ye die!
For we left father and sisters at home
Breaking their hearts for thee."

THE DOUGLAS TRAGEDY

"Rise up, rise up, now, Lord Douglas," she says,
"And put on your armor so bright;
Lord William will have Lady Margaret away
Before that it be light.

"Rise up, rise up, my seven bold sons,
And put on your armor so bright,
And take better care of your youngest sister,
For your eldest's away the last night."

He's mounted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple gray,
With a buglet horn hung down by his side,
And lightly they rode away.

Lord William looked over his left shoulder,
To see what he could see,
And there he spied her seven brethren bold,
Come riding over the lea.

"Light down, light down, Lady Margaret," he said,
"And hold my steed in your hand,
Until that against your seven brethren bold,
And your father, I make a stand."

She held his steed in her milk-white hand,
And never shed one tear,
Until that she saw her seven brethren fall,
And her father hard fighting, who loved her so dear.

"O hold your hand, Lord William!" she said,
"For your strokes they are wondrous sore;
True lovers I can get many a one,
But a father I can never get more."

O she's ta'en out her handkerchief,
It was o' the holland so fine,
And aye she dighted her father's bloody wounds,
That were redder than the wine.

"O choose, O choose, Lady Margaret," he said,
"O whether will ye gang [1] or bide?"
"I'll gang, I'll gang, Lord William," she said,
"For ye've left me no other guide."

[1] go.

He's lifted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple gray,
With a buglet horn hung down by his side,
And slowly they both rode away.

O they rode on, and on they rode,
And all by the light of the moon,
Until they came to yon wan water,
And there they lighted down.

They lighted down to take a drink
Of the spring that ran so clear,
And down the stream ran his good heart's blood,
And sore she 'gan to fear.

"Hold up, hold up, Lord William," she says,
"For I fear that you are slain;"
"'Tis nothing but the shadow of my scarlet cloak,
That shines in the water so plain."

O they rode on, and on they rode,
And all by the light of the moon,
Until they came to his mother's hall door,
And there they lighted down.

"Get up, get up, lady mother," he says,
"Get up, and let me in!
Get up, get up, lady mother," he says,
"For this night my fair lady I've win.

"O make my bed, lady mother," he says,
"O make it broad and deep,
And lay Lady Margaret close at my back,
And the sounder I will sleep."

Lord William was dead long ere midnight,
Lady Margaret long ere day,
And all true lovers that go thegither,
May they have more luck than they!

Lord William was buried in St. Mary's kirk,
Lady Margaret in Mary's quire;
Out o' the lady's grave grew a bonny red rose,
And out o' the knight's a brier.

And they two met, and they two plat,
And fain they would be near;
And all the world might ken[1] right well
They were two lovers dear.

But by and rode the Black Douglas,
And wow but he was rough!
For he pull'd up the bonny brier,
And flang't in St. Mary's Loch.

THE DOWIE DENS OF YARROW

Late at e'en, drinking the wine,
And ere they paid the lawing,[2]
They set a combat them between
To fight it in the dawing.

[1] know. [2] reckoning.

"O stay at home, my noble lord,
O stay at home, my marrow ![1]
My cruel brother will you betray
On the dowie[2] holms of Yarrow."

"O fare ye well, my lady gay !
O fare ye well, my Sarah !
For I maun go, though I ne'er return
Frae the dowie banks o' Yarrow."

She kissed his cheek, she combed his hair,
As oft she had done before, O ;
She's belted him with his noble brand,
And he's away to Yarrow.

As he gaed up the Tennies bank
I wot he gaed with sorrow,
Till down in a glen, he spied nine armed men
On the dowie holms of Yarrow.

"O come ye here to part your land,
The bonnie Forest thorough ?
Or come ye here to wield your brand,
On the dowie holms of Yarrow ?"

"I come not here to part my land,
And neither to beg nor borrow ;
I come to wield my noble brand,
On the bonnie banks of Yarrow.

[1] mate, husband. [2] sad.

"If I see ye all, ye're nine to one,
And that's unequal marrow;
Yet will I fight while lasts my brand,
On the bonnie banks of Yarrow."

Four has he hurt, and five has slain,
On the bloody braes of Yarrow,
Till that stubborn knight came from behind,
And ran his body thorough.

"Go home, go home, good brother John,
And tell your sister Sarah,
To come and lift her leaful lord,
He's sleeping sound on Yarrow."

"Yestreen I dreamed a doleful dream;
I fear there will be sorrow!
I dreamed I pulled the heather green,
With my true love, on Yarrow.

"O gentle wind, that bloweth south,
From where my love repaireth,
Convey a kiss from his dear mouth
And tell me how he fareth.

"But in the glen strive armed men;
They've wrought me dole and sorrow;
They've slain — the comeliest knight they've slain —
He bleeding lies on Yarrow."

As she sped down yon high, high hill,
She gaed with dole and sorrow,
And in the den spied ten slain men,
On the dowie banks of Yarrow.

She kissed his cheek, she combed his hair,
She searched his wounds all thorough,
She kissed them till her lips grew red,
On the dowie holms of Yarrow.

"Now hold your tongue, my daughter dear!
For all this breeds but sorrow;
I'll wed ye to a' better lord,
Than him ye lost on Yarrow."

"Oh hold your tongue, my father dear!
Ye mind me but of sorrow;
A fairer rose did never bloom
Than now lies cropped on Yarrow."

THE BORDER WIDOW[1]

My love he built me a bonny bower
And clad it all with lily flower,
A brawer bower ye ne'er did see,
Than my true love he built for me.

[1] This poem, like the following, is probably only part of a longer ballad. Both poems differ somewhat from the true ballad in that they are lyrical in subject as well as in form: this poem is a lament rather than a story.

There came a man, by middle day,
He spied his sport and went away ;
And brought the king that very night,
Who brake my bower and slew my knight.

He slew my knight to me so dear :
He slew my knight and poined[1] his gear ;
My servants all for life did flee,
And left me in extremity.

I sewed his sheet, making my moan ;
I watched the corpse, myself alone ;
I watched his body, night and day ;
No living creature came that way.

I took his body on my back,
And whiles I gaed, and whiles I sat ;
I digged a grave, and laid him in,
And happed him with the sod so green.

But think na ye my heart was sair
When I laid the mold on his yellow hair ;
O think ye not my heart was woe,
When I turned about, away to go ?

No living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain ;
With one lock of his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair.

[1] seized.

FAIR HELEN[1]

I wish I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries ;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell Lea !

Cursed be the heart that thought the thought,
And cursed the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropped
And died to succor me !

O think ye na my heart was sair,
When my love dropped down and spak na mair.
There did she swoon with mickle care
On fair Kirconnell Lea.

As I went down the water side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell Lea ;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hacked him into pieces sma',
I hacked him into pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

[1] This ballad is perhaps part only of a longer one now lost. The full story is of Helen, the daughter of the Laird of Kirconnell, who met her lover, Adam Fleming, by the river Kirke. A rival, who was favored by her family, shot at Fleming across the river, but Helen, who threw herself before her lover, received the death-wound.

O Helen fair, beyond compare !
I'll make a garland of thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies !
Night and day on me she cries ;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, " Haste, and come to me ! "

O Helen fair ! O Helen chaste !
If I were with thee, I were blessed,
Where thou lies low, and takes thy rest,
On fair Kirconnell Lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding sheet drawn o'er my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell Lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies !
Night and day on me she cries ;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

KATHARINE JANFARIE

There was a may,[1] and a well favored may
Lived high up in yon glen :
Her name was Katharine Janfarie,
She was courted by many men.

[1] maid.

Up then came Lord Lauderdale,
Up from the Lowland Border ;
And he has come to court this may,
All mounted in good order.

He told not her father, he told not her mother,
And he told no one of her kin ;
But he whispered the bonny lassie herself,
And has her favor won.

But out then came Lord Lochinvar,
Out from the English Border,
All for to court this bonny may,
Well mounted and in order.

He told her father, he told her mother,
And all the lave [1] of her kin,
But he told not the bonny may herself,
Till on her wedding e'en

She sent to the Lord of Lauderdale,
Gin he would come and see ;
And he has sent word back again,
Well answered she should be.

And he has sent a messenger,
Right quickly through the land,
And raised many an armed man
To be at his command.

[1] rest.

The bride looked out at a high window
Beheld both dale and down,
And she was aware of her first true love,
With riders many a one.

She scoffed him, and scorned him,
Upon her wedding day ;
And said it was the fairy court,
To see him in array !

" O come ye here to fight, young lord,
Or come ye here to play,
Or come ye here to drink good wine
Upon the wedding day ? "

" I come not here to fight," he said,
" I come not here to play ;
I'll but lead a dance with the bonny bride,
And mount, and go my way."

It is a glass of the blood-red wine
Was filled up them between,
And aye she drank to Lauderdale,
Who her true love had been.

He's taen her by the milk-white hand,
And by the grass-green sleeve ;
He's mounted her high behind himself,
At her kinsmen speired [1] no leave.

[1] asked.

"Now take your bride, Lord Lochinvar,
Now take her, if you may!
But if you take your bride again,
We'll call it but foul play."

There were four-and-twenty bonny boys,
All clad in Johnstone gray,
They said they would take the bride again
By the strong hand, if they may.

Some of them were right willing men,
But they were not willing a';
And four-and-twenty Leader lads
Bid them mount and ride awa'.

Then whingers flew from gentles' sides,
And swords flew from the shea's,
And red and rosy was the blood
Ran down the lily braes.

The blood ran down by Caddon bank,
And down by Caddon brae;
And, sighing, said the bonnie bride,
"O woe's me for foul play!"

My blessing on your heart, sweet thing,
Woe to your willful will!
There's many a gallant gentleman
Whose blood ye have garred to spill.

Now all you lords of Fair England,
And that dwell by the English Border,
Come never here to seek a wife,
For fear of sic disorder.

EDWARD, EDWARD

"Why does your brand so drop with blood,
Edward, Edward?
Why does your brand so drop with blood,
And why so sad gang ye O?"
"O I have killed my hawk so good,
Mother, mother;
O I have killed my hawk so good,
And I had no more but he O."

"Your hawkës blood was never so red,
Edward, Edward:
Your hawkës blood was never so red,
My dear son I tell thee O."
"O I have killed my red roan steed,
Mother, mother;
O I have killed my red roan steed,
That erst was so fair and free O."

"Your steed was old, and ye have got more,
Edward, Edward:
Your steed was old, and ye have got more,
Some other dule[1] ye dree[2] O."
"O I have killed my father dear,
Mother, mother;
O I have killed my father dear,
Alas! and woe is me O."

[1] grief. [2] endure.

"And what penance will ye dree, for that,
Edward, Edward?
And what penance will ye dree for that?
My dear son now tell me O."
"I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
Mother, mother;
I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
And I'll fare over the sea O."

"And what will ye do with your towers and your hall,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye do with your towers and your hall,
That were so fair to see O?"
"I'll let them stand till they down fall,
Mother, mother;
I'll let them stand till they down fall,
For here never more may I be O."

"And what will ye leave to your bairns[1] and your wife,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
When ye gang over the sea O?"
"The worldës room, let them beg through life,
Mother, mother:
The worldës room, let them beg through life,
For them never more will I see O."

[1] children.

"And what will ye leave to your own mother dear,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your own mother dear?
My dear son now tell me O."
"The curse of hell from me shall ye bear,
Mother, mother:
The curse of hell from me shall ye bear,
Sic counsels ye gave to me O."

SIR PATRICK SPENS

The king sits in Dumferline towne
Drinking the blood-red wine:
"O where will I get a good sailor
To sail this ship of mine?"

Up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the king's right knee:
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That sails upon the sea."

The king has written a broad letter
And signed it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens
Was walking on the strand.

The first line that Sir Patrick read
A loud laugh laughed he:
The next line that Sir Patrick read
The tear blinded his ee.

"Oh who is this has done this deed,
This ill deed unto me;
To send me out this time o' the year
To sail upon the sea?

"Make haste, make haste, my merry men all,
Our good ship sails the morn."
"Oh say not so, my master dear,
For I fear a deadly storm.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moon
With the old moon in her arm,
And I fear, I fear, my dear master,
That we will come to harm."

Oh our Scots nobles were right loath
To wet their cork-heeled shoon,
But long ere all the play was played
Their hats they swam aboun.

O long, long may their ladies sit
With their fans into their hand,
Or ere they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand.

O long, long may the ladies stand
With their gold combs in their hair
Waiting for their own dear lords,
For they'll see them no more.

O forty miles off Aberdeen
It's fifty fathom deep.
And there lies good Sir Patrick Spens
With the Scots lords at his feet.

JOHNIE OF BRAIDISLEE

Johnie rose up in a May morning,
Called for water to wash his hands —
"Gar[1] loose to me the good gray dogs,
That are bound with iron bands."

When Johnie's mother got word of that,
Her hands for dule she wrang —
"O Johnie! for my benison,
To the greenwood dinna gang.

"Enough you have o' good wheat bread,
And enough o' the blood-red wine;
And therefore, for no venison, Johnie,
I pray ye, stir frae home."

But Johnie's busked up his good bend bow,
His arrows one by one,
And he has gone to Durrisdeer,
To hunt the dun deer down.

As he came down by Merriemas
And in by the benty[2] line
There has he espied a deer lying
Aneath a bush of ling.

Johnie he shot, and the dun deer lap,
And he wounded her on the side;
But atween the water and the brae,
His hounds they laid her pride.

[1] make, let. [2] bents are coarse grass or rushes.

And Johnie has brittled[1] the deer so well
That he's had out her liver and lungs;
And with these he has feasted his bloody hounds,
As if they had been earl's sons.

They ate so much o' the venison,
And drank so much o' the blood,
That Johnie and all his bloody hounds
Fell asleep as they had been dead.

And by there came a silly old carle,
An ill death mote he die!
For he's away to Hislinton,
Where the Seven Foresters did lie.

"What news, what news, ye gray-headed carle,
What news bring ye to me?"
"I bring no news," said the gray-headed carle,
"Save what these eyes did see.

"As I came down by Merriemas,
And down among the scroggs,[2]
The bonniest childe that ever I saw
Lay sleeping among his dogs.

"The shirt that was upon his back
Was o' the Holland fine;
The doublet which was over that
Was o' the Lincoln twine.

[1] cut up. [2] low trees.

"The buttons that were on his sleeve
Were of the gold so good,
The good gray dogs he lay among,
Their mouths were dyed wi' blood."

Then out and spake the First Forester,
The head man ower them a', —
"If this be Johnie o' Braidislee,
No nearer will we draw."

"But up and spake the Sixth Forester
(His sister's son was he),
If this be Johnie o' Braidislee,
We soon shall gar him die."

The first flight of arrows the Foresters sent
They wounded him on the knee;
And out and spake the Seventh Forester,
"The next will gar him die."

Johnie's set his back against an oak,
His foot against a stone;
And he has slain the Seven Foresters,
He has slain them all but one.

He has broken three ribs in that one's side,
But and[1] his collar bone.
He's laid him twofold o'er his steed,
Bade him carry the tidings home.

[1] and also.

O is there no a bonny bird
Can sing as I can say,
Could flee away to my mother's bower
And tell to fetch Johnie away?

The starling flew to his mother's window pane,
It whistled and it sang;
And aye the o'erword of the tune
Was — "Johnie tarries lang!"

They made a rod o' the hazel bush,
Another o' the sloe-thorn tree,
And many many were the men
At fetching o'er Johnie.

Then out and spake his old mother,
And fast her tears did fa' —
"Ye would no be warned my son Johnie,
Frae the hunting to bide awa'.

"Oft have I brought to Braidislee
The less gear and the more,
But I ne'er brought to Braidislee
What grieved my heart so sore.

"But woe betide that silly old carle!
An ill death shall he die!
For the highest tree in Merriemas,
Shall be his morning's fee."

Now Johnie's good bend bow is broke,
And his good gray dogs are slain;
And his body lies dead in Durrisdeer,
And his hunting it is done.

EDOM O' GORDON

It fell about the Martinmas,
When the wind blew shrill and cold,
Said Edom o' Gordon[1] to his men,
"We maun draw to a hold.

"And what an a hold shall we draw to,
My merry men and me?
We will go to the house o' the Rodes,
To see that fair ladye."

She had no suner buskit hersell,
Nor putten on her gown,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were round about the town.[2]

They had no sooner supper set,
Nor sooner said the grace,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were closed about the place.

The lady ran to her tower head,
As fast as she could hie,
To see if, by her fair speeches,
She could with him agree.

[1] Adam Gordon of Auchindoun, who represented the royal authority in the north of Scotland in 1571. The expedition in the ballad actually took place, although Gordon himself did not lead it, but sent instead a certain Captain Ker.

[2] The word for fortified place.

As soon as he saw the lady fair,
And her gates all locked fast,
He fell into a rage of wrath,
And his heart was aghast.

"Come down to me, ye lady fair,
Come down, to me let's see;
Come down and put your hand in mine,
The morn my bride to be."

"I winna come doun, ye false Gordon,
I winna come doun to thee;
I winna forsake my own dear lord,
That is so far frae me."

"Gie up your house, ye lady fair,
Gie up your house to me;
Or I shall burn yourself therein,
But and your babies three."

"I winna gie up, ye false Gordon,
To no such traitor as thee;
And if ye burn my own dear babes,
My lord shall make ye dree!"

"Set fire to the house!" quo' the false Gordon,
"Sin better may no be;
And I will burn herself therein,
But and her babies three."

"And e'en woe worth [1] ye, Jock, my man!
I paid ye well your fee;
Why pull ye out the ground wall stone,
Lets in the reek [2] to me?

"And e'en wae worth ye, Jock, my man!
For I paid ye well your hire;
Why pull ye out my ground wall stone,
To me lets in the fire?"

"Ye paid me well my hire, lady,
Ye paid me well my fee;
But now I'm Edom o' Gordon's man,
Maun either do or die."

O then bespake her youngest son,
Sat on the nurse's knee;
"Dear mother, give over this house," he says,
"For the reek it smothers me."

"I winna give up my house, my dear,
To no sic a traitor as he;
Come weel, come woe, my jewels fair,
Ye must take share with me."

O then bespake her daughter dear —
She was both jimp and small —
"O row me in a pair o' sheets,
And tow me owre the wall."

[1] be to. [2] smoke.

They rowed her in a pair of sheets,
And towed her over the wall;
But on the point of Gordon's spear
She got a deadly fall.

O bonnie, bonnie was her mouth,
And cherry were her cheeks;
And clear, clear was her yellow hair,
Whereon the red blude dreeps.

Then wi' his spear he turned her over,
O gin her face was wan!
He said, "You are the first that e'er
I wish'd alive again."

He turned her over and over again,
O gin her skin was white!
"I might hae spared that bonnie face,
To been some man's delight.

"Busk and boun, my merry men all,
For ill dooms I do guess;
I canna look on that bonnie face,
As it lies on the grass!"

"Who looks to freits,[1] my master dear,
It's freits will follow them;
Let it ne'er be said that Edom o' Gordon
Was daunted by a dame."

[1] portents.

O then bespied her own dear lord,
As he came o'er the lea ;
He saw his castle all in a lowe,[1]
As far as he could see.

" Put on, put on, my michty men,
As fast as ye can dri'e ;
For he that is hindmost of the throng,
Shall ne'er get good o' me ! "

Then some they rode, and some they ran,
Full fast out over the plain,
But long, long e'er he could get up,
They were all dead and slain.

But many were the moody[2] men,
Lay gasping on the green,
For of fifty men that Edom brought out
There were but five went home.

And many were the moody men,
Lay gasping on the green,
And many were the fair ladies
Lay lemanless at home.

And round and round the walls he went,
Their ashes for to view ;
At last into the flames he fled,
And bade the world adieu.

[1] fire. [2] passionate.

KINMONT WILLIE

Oh have ye not heard of the false Sakelde?[1]
  Oh have ye not heard of the keen Lord Scroope?
How they have ta'en bold Kinmont Willie[2]
  On Hairibee to hang him up?

Had Willie had but twenty men,
  But twenty men as stout as he,
False Sakelde had never the Kinmont taken
  With eight score in his companie.

They bound his legs beneath the steed,
  They tied his hands behind his back;
They guarded him fivesome on each side,
  And they brought him over the Liddel rack.

They led him through the Liddel rack,
  And also through the Carlisle sands;
They brought him to Carlisle Castell,
  To be at my Lord Scroope's commands.

"My hands are tied, but my tongue is free,
  And who will dare this deed avow?
Or answer by the Border law,
  Or answer to the bold Buccleuch?"

[1] Sakelde was the agent of Lord Scroope, the English Warden of the Border.

[2] William Armstrong, of Kinmonth: the time of this adventure was 1596.

"Now hold thy tongue, thou rank reiver!
There's never a Scot shall set ye free;
Before ye cross my castle-gate,
I trow ye shall take farewell of me."

"Fear ye not that, my lord," quoth Willie;
"By the faith of my body, Lord Scroope," he said,
"I never yet lodged in a hostelry
But I paid my lawing before I gaed."[1]

Now word is gone to the bold Keeper,
In Branksome Hall where that he lay,
That Lord Scroope has ta'en the Kinmont Willie,
Between the hours of night and day.

He has ta'en the table with his hand,
He garred the red wine spring on high;
"Now a curse upon my head," he said,
"But avenged of Lord Scroope I'll be.

"Oh, is my basnet[2] a widow's kerch,[3]
Or my lance a wand of the willow tree,
Or my arm a lady's lily hand,
That an English lord should lightly me?

"And have they ta'en him, Kinmont Willie,
Against the truce of the Border-tide,
And forgotten that the bold Buccleuch
Is Keeper here on the Scottish side?

[1] went. [2] helmet. [3] kerchief, head covering.

"And have they e'en ta'en him, Kinmont Willie,
Withouten either dread or fear,
And forgotten that the bold Buccleuch
Can back a steed or shake a spear?

"Oh, were there war between the lands,
As well I wot that there is none,
I would slight[1] Carlisle Castle high,
Though it were builded of marble stone.

"I would set that castle in a low,
And slocken[2] it with English blood;
There's never a man in Cumberland
Should ken where Carlisle Castle stood.

"But since no war's between the lands,
And there is peace, and peace should be,
I'll harm no English lad or lass,
But yet the Kinmont freed shall be!"

He has called him forty marchmen bold,
Were kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch,
With spur on heel, and splint[3] on spauld[4]
And gloves of green, and feathers blue.

There were five and five before them all,
With hunting horns and bugles bright,
And five and five came with Buccleuch
Like Warden's men arrayed for fight.

[1] raze to the ground.
[2] quench.
[3] a piece of armor.
[4] shoulder.

And five and five like a mason-gang,
That carried the ladders long and high ;
And five and five like broken men ;
And so they reached the Woodhouselee.

And as we crossed the Bateable Land
When to the English side we held,
The first of men that we met with,
Who should it be but the false Sakelde?

"Where be ye going, ye hunters keen?"
Quoth false Sakelde, "come tell to me."
"We go to hunt an English stag,
Has trespassed on the Scots countrye."

"Where be ye going, ye marshal-men?"
Quoth false Sakelde, "come tell me true."
"We go to catch a rank reiver,
Has broken faith with the bold Buccleuch."

"Where be ye going, ye mason-lads,
With all your ladders long and high?"
"We go to harry a corby's[1] nest
That wones[2] not far from Woodhouselee."

"Where be ye going, ye broken men?"
Quoth false Sakelde, "come tell to me."
Now Dickie of Dryhope led that band,
And the never a word of lear had he.

[1] crow's. [2] lives.

"Why trespass ye on the English side?
Row-footed outlaws, stand!" quoth he.
The ne'er a word had Dickie to say,
So he thrust his lance through his false bodye.

Then on we held for Carlisle town,
And at Staneshaw-bank the Eden we crossed;
The water was great and mickle of spate,[1]
But never a horse nor man we lost.

And when we reached the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind was rising loud and high;
And there the laird garred leave our steeds,
For fear that they should stamp and neigh.

And when we left the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind began full loud to blaw;
But 'twas wind and weet, and fire and sleet,
When we came beneath the castle wa'.

We crept on knees and held our breath,
Till we placed the ladders against the wall;
And so ready was Buccleuch himself
To mount the first before us all.

He has ta'en the watchman by the throat,
He flung him down upon the lead;
"Had there not been peace between our lands,
Upon the other side thou hadst gaed."[2]

[1] full in a freshet. [2] gone.

"Now sound out trumpets!" quo' Buccleuch;
"Let's waken Lord Scroope right merrily!"
Then loud the Warden's trumpets blew,
"Oh who dare meddle with me?"

Then speedily to work we gaed,
And raised the slogan one and all,
And cut a hole in a sheet of lead,
And so we won to the castle hall.

They thought King James and all his men
Had won the house with bow and spear;
It was but twenty Scots and ten,
That put a thousand in such a stir.

With coulters and with forehammers,
We garred the bars bang merrily,
Until we came to the inner prison,
Where Willie of Kinmont he did lie.

And when we came to the lower prison,
Where Willie of Kinmont he did lie,
"Oh, sleep ye, wake ye, Kinmont Willie,
Upon the morn that thou's to die?"

"Oh, I sleep soft and I wake oft,
It's long since sleeping was fled from me;
Give my service back to my wife and bairns,
And all the good fellows that speir[1] for me.

[1] ask.

Then Red Rowan has hente him up,
The starkest man in Teviotdale :
"Abide, abide now, Red Rowan,
Till of Lord Scroope I take farewell.

"Farewell, farewell, my good Lord Scroope !
My good Lord Scroope, farewell," he cried ;
"I'll pay you for my lodging mail
When first we meet on the borderside."

Then shoulder high, with shout and cry,
We bore him down the ladder long ;
At every stride Red Rowan made,
I wot the Kinmont's irons made clang.

"Oh, many a time," quo' Kinmont Willie,
"I have ridden a horse both wild and wode,[1]
But a rougher beast than Red Rowan
I ween my legs have ne'er bestrode.

"And many a time," quo' Kinmont Willie,
"I've pricked a horse out over the furs ;
But since the day I backed a steed,
I never wore such cumbrous spurs."

We scarce had won the Staneshaw-bank
When all the Carlisle bells were rung,
And a thousand men, in horse and foot,
Came with the keen Lord Scroope along.

[1] mad.

Buccleuch has turned to Eden Water,
Even where it flowed from bank to brim,
And he has plunged in with all his band,
And safely swam them through the stream.

He turned him on the other side,
And at Lord Scroope his glove flung he,
"If ye like not my visit in merry England,
In fair Scotland come visit me!"

All sore astonished stood Lord Scroope,
He stood as still as a rock of stone;
He scarcely dared to trust his eyes,
When through the water they had gone.

"He is either himself a devil from hell,
Or else his mother a witch must be;
I would not have ridden that wan water,
For all the gold in Christentie."

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLIN A DALE

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood
All under the green-wood tree,
There he was aware of a brave young man
As fine as fine might be.

The youngster was clothed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a roundelay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood,
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before,
It was clean cast away;
And at every step he fetched a sigh,
"Alack and a well-a-day!"

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Midge the miller's son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he see them come.

"Stand off, stand off," the young man said,
"What is your will with me?"
"You must come before our master straight,
Under yon green-wood tree."

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin asked him courteously,
"O hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me?"

"I have no money," the young man said,
"But five shillings and a ring;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

"Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she is now from me ta'en,
And chosen to be an old knight's delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain."

"What is thy name?" then said Robin Hood,
"Come tell me, without any fail:"
"By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
"My name it is Allin a Dale."

"What wilt thou give me," said Robin Hood,
"In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her unto thee?"

"I have no money," then quoth the young man,
"No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be."

"How many miles is it to thy true love?
Come tell me without any guile:"
"By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
"It is but five little mile."

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,[1]
Until he came unto the church,
Where Allin should keep his wedding.

"What hast thou here?" the bishop he said,
"I prithee now tell unto me:"
"I am a bold harper," quoth Robin Hood,
"And the best in the north countrye."

"O welcome, O welcome," the bishop he said,
"That music best pleaseth me;"
"You shall have no music," quoth Robin Hood,
"Till the bride and the bridegroom I see."

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass,
Did shine like the glistering gold.

"This is not a fit match," quoth bold Robin Hood,
"That you do seem to make here;
For since we are come into the church,
The bride shall choose her own dear."

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three;
When four and twenty bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lea.

[1] stop.

And when they came into the churchyard,
Marching all on a row,
The first man was Allin a Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

"This is thy true love," Robin he said,
"Young Allin, as I hear say;
And you shall be married at this same time,
Before we depart away."

"That shall not be," the bishop he said,
"For thy word shall not stand;
They shall be three times asked in the church,
As the law is of our land."

Robin Hood pulled off the bishop's coat,
And put it upon Little John;
"By the faith of my body," then Robin said,
"This cloth does make thee a man."

When Little John went into the quire,
The people began for to laugh;
He asked them seven times in the church,
Lest three times should not be enough.

"Who gives me this maid?" then said Little John.
Quoth Robin Hood, "That do I,
And he that takes her from Allin a Dale
Full dearly he shall her buy."

And thus having made end of this merry wedding
The bride looked like a queen;
And so they returned to the merry green-wood,
Amongst the leaves so green.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE CURTAL FRIAR

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
And flowers are fresh and gay,
Robin Hood and his merry men
Were disposed to play.

Then some would leap and some would run,
And some would use artillery;[1]
"Which of you can a good bow draw,
A good archer for to be?

"Which of you can kill a buck,
Or who can kill a doe,
Or who can kill a hart of greece
Five hundred foot him fro?"

Will Scadlock he killed a buck,
And Midge he killed a doe,
And Little John killed a hart of greece
Five hundred foot him fro.

[1] The word was formerly used for any warlike means of discharging missiles, hence for bows, as later for muskets, and now specifically for great guns.

"God's blessing on thy heart," said Robin Hood,
"That hath such a shot for me;
I would ride my horse a hundred miles,
To find one could match thee."

This caused Will Scadlock to laugh,
He laughed full heartily:
"There lives a curtal friar in Fountain Abbey
Will beat both him and thee.

"The curtal friar in Fountain Abbey
Well can a strong bow draw;
He will beat you and your yeomen,
Set them all in a row."

Robin Hood he took a solemn oath,
It was by Mary free,
That he would neither eat nor drink
Till the friar he did see.

Robin Hood put on his harness good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him well.

He took his bow into his hand,
It was made of a trusty tree,
With a sheaf of arrows at his belt,
And to Fountain Dale went he.

And coming into Fountain Dale,
No farther would he ride ;
There he was aware of the curtal friar,
Walking by the water side.

The friar had on a harness good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him well.

Robin Hood lighted from off his horse,
And tied him to a thorn :
"Carry me over the water, thou curtal friar,
Or else thy life's forlorn." [1]

The friar took Robin Hood on his back,
Deep water he did bestride,
And spake neither good word nor bad,
Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leaped Robin off the friar's back ;
The friar said to him again,
"Carry me over this water, thou fine fellow,
Or it shall breed thee pain."

Robin Hood took the friar on his back,
Deep water he did bestride,
And spake neither good word nor bad,
Till he came to the other side.

[1] lost.

Lightly leaped the friar off Robin Hood's back,
Robin Hood said to him again,
"Carry me over the water, thou curtal friar,
Or it shall breed thee pain."

The friar took Robin on's back again,
And stepped in to the knee;
Till he came at the middle stream
Neither good nor bad spake he.

And coming to the middle stream,
There he threw Robin in;
"And choose thee, choose thee, fine fellow,
Whether thou wilt sink or swim."

Robin Hood swam to a bush of broom,
The friar to a wicker wand;
Bold Robin Hood is gone to shore,
And took his bow in his hand.

One of his best arrows under his belt
To the friar he let fly;
The curtal friar with his steel buckler
Did put that arrow by.

"Shoot on, shoot on, thou fine fellow,
Shoot as thou hast begun,
If thou shoot here a summer's day,
Thy mark I will not shun."

Robin Hood shot passing well,
Till his arrows all were gane ;
They took their swords and steel bucklers,
They fought with might and main ;

From ten o' th' clock that very day,
Till four in the afternoon ;
Then Robin Hood came to his knees,
Of the friar to beg a boon.

"A boon, a boon, thou curtal friar,
I beg it on my knee :
Give me leave to set my horn to my mouth,
And to blow blastes three."

"That I will do," said the curtal friar,
"Of thy blasts I have no doubt ;
I hope thou'lt blow so passing well,
Till both thy eyes fall out."

Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,
He blew out blastes three ;
Half a hundred yeomen with bowes bent,
Came raking over the lea.

"Whose men are these," said the friar,
"That come so hastily?"
"These men are mine," said Robin Hood ;
"Friar, what is it to thee?"

"A boon, a boon," said the curtal friar,
"The like I gave to thee;
Give me leave to set my fist to my mouth,
And to whute whuës three."

"That will I do," said Robin Hood
"Or else I were to blame;
Three whuës in a friar's fist
Would make me glad and fain."

The friar set his fist to his mouth,
And whuted whuës three;
Half a hundred good ban-dogs
Came running over the lea.

"Here's for every man a dog,
And I myself for thee;"
"Nay, by my faith," said Robin Hood,
"Friar, that may not be."

Two dogs at once to Robin Hood did go,
The one behind, the other before;
Robin Hood's mantle of Lincoln green
Off from his back they tore.

And whether his men shot east or west,
Or they shot north or south,
The curtal dogs, so taught they were,
They kept the arrows in their mouth.

"Take up thy dogs," said Little John,
"Friar, at my bidding be;"
"Whose man art thou," said the curtal friar,
"Comes here to prate with me?"

"I am Little John, Robin Hood's man,
Friar, I will not lie;
If thou take not up thy dogs soon,
I'll take them up and thee."

Little John had a bow in his hand,
He shot with might and main;
Soon half a score of the friar's dogs
Lay dead upon the plain.

"Hold thy hand, good fellow," said the curtal friar,
"Thy master and I will agree;
And we will have new orders taken
With all the haste may be."

"If thou wilt forsake fair Fountain Dale,
And Fountain Abbey free,
Every Sunday throughout the year,
A noble shall be thy fee:

"And every holiday through the year,
Changed shall thy garment be,
If thou wilt go to fair Nottingham,
And there remain with me."

The curtal friar had kept Fountain Dale
Seven long years and more;
There was neither knight, lord, nor earl
Could make him yield before.

THE HUNTING OF THE CHEVIOT

FYTTE THE FIRST

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the maugre of [1] doughty Douglas
And all that ever with him be.

The fattest harts in all Cheviot
He said he would kill, and carry them away:
"By my faith," said the doughty Douglas again,
"I will let that hunting if I may."

Then the Percy out of Banborough came,
With him a mighty meinie,[2]
With fifteen hundred archers bold of blood and bone;
They were chosen out of shires three.

This began on a Monday at morn
In Cheviot the hillës so high;
The child may rue that is unborn,
It was the more pitye.

[1] in spite of. [2] following.

The drivers through the woodës went,
For to raise the deer;
Bowmen bickered[1] upon the bent
With their broad arrows clear.

Then the wild thorough the woodës went,
On every sidë sheer,
Greyhoundës thorough the grevës glent,
For to kill their deer.

This began in Cheviot the hills aboun,
Early on a Monnyn-day,
By that it drew to the hour of noon
A hundred fat harts dead there lay.

They blew a mort upon the bent,
They 'sembled on sidës sheer,
To the quarry then the Percy went,
To see the brittling of the deer.

He said, "It was the Douglas' promise
This day to meet me here;
But I wist he would fail, verament;"
A great oath the Percy sware.

At the last a squire of Northumberland
Looked at his hand full nigh;
He was 'ware of the doughty Douglas coming,
With him a mighty meinie.

[1] went hurriedly.

Both with spear, bill, and brand,
It was a mighty sight to see;
Hardier men, both of heart and hand,
Were not in Christiantye.

They were twenty hundred spearmen good,
Withouten any fail;
They were born along by the water o' Tweed
I' th' bounds of Teviotdale.

"Leave off the brittling of the deer," he said;
"And to your bows look ye take good heed;
For never sith ye were of your mothers born
Had ye never so mickle [1] need."

The doughty Douglas on a steed
He rode all his men beforn;
His armor glittered as did a glede;
A bolder bairn was never born.

"Tell me whose men ye are," he says,
"Or whose men that ye be:
Who gave you leave to hunt in this Cheviot chase,
In the spite of mine and me?"

The first man that ever him an answer made,
It was the bold Percy:
"We will not tell thee whose men we are," he says,
"Nor whose men that we be;
But we will hunt here in this chase,
In the spite of thine and of thee.

[1] much.

"The fairest harts in all Cheviot
We have killed and cast to carry them away."
"By my troth," said the doughty Douglas again,
"Therefore the one of us shall die this day."

Then said the doughty Douglas
Unto the lord Percy:
"To kill all these guiltless men,
Alas it were great pitye.

"But, Percy, thou art a lord of land,
I am an earl called within my countrye;
Let all our men upon a party stand,
And do the battle of me and thee."

"Now Christ's curse on his crown," said the lord Percy,
"Whoever thereto says nay;
By my troth, doughty Douglas," he says,
"Thou shalt never see that day.

"Neither in England, Scotland, nor France,
Nor for no man of a woman born,
But, and fortune be my chance,
I dare meet him, one man for one."

Then bespake a squire of Northumberland,
Richard Witherington was his name:
"It shall never be told in South England," he said,
"To King Harry the Fourth for shame.

"I wat you ben great lordës two,
I am a poor squire of land :
I will never see my captain fight on a field,
And stand myself and look on.
But while I may my weapon wield,
I will not fail both heart and hand."

That day, that day, that dreadful day !
The first fytte here I find ;
And you will hear any more o' the hunting
o' the Cheviot,
Yet there is more behind.

FYTTE THE SECOND

The English men had their bows ybent,
Their hearts were good enough ;
The first of arrows that they shot off,
Seven score spearmen they slew.

Yet bides the earl Douglas upon the bent,
A captain good enough ;
And that was seenë verament,
For he wrought them both woe and wouch.

The Douglas parted his host in three,
Like a great chieftain of pride ;
With sure spears of mighty tree,
They come in on every side.

Thorough our English archery
Gave many a wound full wide ;
Many a doughty they garred to die,
Which gained them no pride.

The English men let their bowës be,
And pulled out brands that were bright ;
It was a heavy sight to see
Bright swords on basnets light.

Thorough rich mail and miniple,
Many stern the strock done straight,
Many a freak[1] that was full free,
There under foot did light.

At last the Douglas and the Percy met,
Like two captains of might and main ;
They swapte together till they both sweat,
With swords that were of fine milan.

These worthy freakës for to fight,
Thereto they were full fain,
Till the blood out of their basnets sprent
As ever did hail or rain.

"Yield thee, Percy," said the Douglas,
"And i' faith I shall thee bring
Where thou shalt have an earl's wages
Of Jamie our Scottish king.

[1] man, hero.

"Thou shalt have thy ransom free,
I hight thee hear this thing;
For the manfullest man yet art thou
That ever I conquered in field fighting."

"Nay," said the Lord Percy,
"I told it thee beforn,
That I would never yielded be
To no man of woman born."

With that there came an arrow hastily
Forth of a mighty wane;
It hath stricken the earl Douglas
In at the breast-bane.

Thorough liver and lunges both
The sharp arrow is gone,
That never after in all his life-days
He spoke more wordës but one:
That was "Fight ye, my merry men, whiles ye may,
For my life-days are gone."

The Percy leaned on his brand,
And saw the Douglas die;
He took the dead man by the hand,
And said, "Woe is me for thee!

"To have thy life, I would have parted with
My lands for yeares three,
For a better man, of heart nor of hand,
Was not in all the north countrye."

Of all that see a Scottish knight
Was called Sir Hugh the Montgomerye.
He saw the Douglas to his death was dight,
He spended a spear, a trusty tree.

He rode upon a corsiare
Through a hundred archery ;
He never stinted, nor never blane,[1]
Till he came to the good lord Percy.

He set upon the lord Percy
A dint that was full sore ;
With a sure spear of a mighty tree
Clean through the body he the Percy bore,

On the tother side that a man might see
A large cloth-yard and mare :
Two better captains were not in Christiantye
Than that day slain were there.

An archer of Northumberland
Saw slain was the lord Percy ;
He bore a bended bow in his hand,
Was made of a trusty tree.

An arrow, that a cloth-yard was long,
To the hard steel haled he ;
A dint that was both sad and sore
He set on Sir Hugh the Montgomerye.

[1] stopped.

The dint it was both sad and sore,
That he of Montgomery set.
The swan-feathers that his arrow bore
With his heart-blood they were wet.

There was never a freak one foot would flee
But still in stour did stand,
Hewing on each other, while others might dree,
With many a baleful brand.

This battle began in Cheviot
An hour before the noon,
And when evensong bell was rung
The battle was not half done.

They took their way on either hand
By the light of the moon,
Many had no strength for to stand,
In Cheviot the hills aboun.

Of fifteen hundred archers of England
Went away but seventy and three;
Of twenty hundred spearmen of Scotland,
But even five and fiftye.

But all were slain Cheviot within;
They had no strength to stand on high;
The child may rue that is unborn,
It was the more pitye.

There was slain, with the lord Percy,
Sir John of Agerston,
Sir Roger, the hind Hartley,
Sir William, the bold Heron.

Sir George the worthy Lovel,
A knight of great renown,
Sir Ralph the riche Rugby,
With dints were beaten down.

For Witherington my heart was woe,
That ever he slain should be,
For when both his legs were hewn in two
Yet he kneeled and fought on his knee.

There was slain with the doughty Douglas,
Sir Hugh the Montgomery,
Sir Davy Liddale, that worthy was,
His sister's son was he.

Sir Charles a Murray in that place,
That never a foot would flee;
Sir Hugh Maxwell, a lord he was,
With the Douglas did he die.

So on the morrow they made them biers
Of birch and hazel so gray,
Many widows with weeping tears
Came to fetch their mates away.

Teviotdale may carp of care,
Northumberland may make great moan,
For two such captains as slain were there,
On the march-party shall never be none.

Word is comen to Edinborough
To Jamie the Scottish king,
That doughty Douglas, lieutenant of the Marches
He lay slain Cheviot within.

His handës did he weal and wring,
He said, "Alas and woe is me!
Such another captain Scotland within,"
He said, "I' faith should never be."

Word is comen to lovely London
Til the fourth Harry our king,
That lord Percy, lieutenant of the Marches,
He lay slain Cheviot within.

"God have mercy on his soul," said King Harry,
"Good Lord, if thy will it be!
I have a hundred captains in England," he said,
"As good as ever was he:
But Percy, an I brook my life,
Thy death well quit shall be."

As our noble king made his avow,
Like a noble prince of renown,
For the death of the lord Percy
He did the battle of Humbledown.

Where six and thirty Scottish knights
On a day were beaten down:
Glendale glittered on their armor bright,
Over castle, tower, and town.

This was the Hunting of the Cheviot,
That e'er began this spurn;
Old men that know the ground well enough,
Call it the battle of Otterburn.

At Otterburn began this spurn
Upon a Monnyn-day,
There was the doughty Douglas slain,
The Percy never went away.

There was never a time on the march-partye
Since the Douglas and Percy met,
But it is marvel an the red blood ran not
As the rain does in the street.

Jesus Christ our bales bete[1]
And to the bliss us bring!
Thus was the hunting of the Cheviot:
God send us all good ending.

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE

Yt felle abowght the Lamasse tyde,
Whan husbondes wynnes ther haye,
The dowghtye Dowglasse bowynd[2] hym to ryde,
In Ynglond to take a praye.

[1] better our ills. [2] made ready.

The yerlle of Fyffe, wythowghten stryffe,
He bowynd hym over Sulway;
The grete wolde ever together ryde;
That raysse they may rewe for aye.

Over Ottercap hyll they cam in,
And so down by Rodclyffe crage;
Upon Grene Lynton they lyghted dowyn,
Styrande[1] many a stagge.

And boldely brente Northomberlond,
And haryed many a towyn;
They dyd owr Ynglyssh men grete wrange,
To battell that were not bowyn.

Then spake a berne[2] upon the bent,
Of comforte that was not colde,
And sayd, "We have brente Northomberlond,
We have all welth in holde.

"Now we have haryed all Bamboroweschyre,
All the welth in the world have wee;
I rede we ryde to Newe Castell,
So styll and stalworthlye."

Upon the morowe, when it was day,
The standerds schone fulle bryght;
To the Newe Castell they toke the waye,
And thether they cam fulle ryght.

[1] driving. [2] warrior.

Syr Henry Perssy laye at the New Castell,
I tell yow wythowtten drede ;
He had byn a march-man [1] all hys dayes,
And kepte Barwyke upon Twede.

To the Newe Castell where they cam,
The Skottes they cryde on hight,
"Syr Hary Perssy, and thow byste within,
Com to the fylde, and fyght.

"For we have brente Northomberlonde,
Thy erytage good and ryght,
And syne my logeyng I have take,
Wyth my brande dubbyd many a knyght."

Syr Harry Perssy cam to the walles,
The Skottyssch oste for to se,
"And thow hast brente Northomberlond,
Full sore it rewyth me.

"Yf thou hast haryed all Bamboroweschyre,
Thow hast done me grete envye ;
For the trespasse thow hast me done,
The tone of us schall dye."

"Where schall I byde the ?" sayd the Dowglas,
"Or where wylte thow com to me ?"
"At Otterborne, in the hygh way,
Ther mast thow well loged be.

[1] border man.

"The roo ful rekeles ther sche rinnes,
To make the game and glee;
The fawken and the fesaunt both,
Amonge the holtes on hye.

"Ther mast thow have thy welth at wyll,
Well looged ther mast be;
Yt schall not be long or I com the tyll,"
Sayd Syr Harry Perssye.

"Ther schall I byde the," sayd the Dowglas,
"By the fayth of my bodye:"
"Thether schall I com," sayd Syr Harry Perssy
"My trowth I plyght to the."

A pype of wyne he gave them over the walles,
For soth as I yow saye;
Ther he mayd the Dowglasse drynke,
And all hys ost that daye.

The Dowglas turnyd hym homewarde agayne,
For soth withowghten naye;
He toke his logeyng at Otterborne,
Upon a Wedynsday.

And ther he pyght hys standerd dowyn,
Hys gettyng more and lesse,
And syne he warned hys men to goo
To choose ther geldynges gresse.[1]

[1] grass.

A Skottysshe knyght hoved upon the bent,
A wache I darę well saye ;
So was he ware on the noble Perssy
In the dawnyng of the daye.

He prycked to hys pavyleon dore,
As faste as he myght ronne ;
"Awaken, Dowglas," cryed the knyght,
"For hys love that syttes in trone.

"Awaken, Dowglas," cryed the knyght,
"For thow maste waken wyth wynne ;
Yender have I spyed the prowde Perssye,
And seven standardes wyth hym."

"Nay by my trowth," the Dowglas sayed,
"It ys but a fayned taylle ;
He durst not loke on my brede banner
For all Ynglonde so haylle.

"Was I not yesterdaye at the Newe Castell,
That stondes so fayre on Tyne ?
For all the men the Perssy had,
He coude not garre me ones to dyne."

He stepped owt at his pavelyon dore,
To loke and it were lesse :
"Araye yow, lordynges, one and all,
For here bygynnes no peysse.

"The yerle of Mentaye, thow arte my eme[1]
The fowarde I gyve to the:
The yerlle of Huntlay, cawte and kene,
He schall be wyth the.

"The lorde of Bowghan, in armure bryght,
On the other hand he schall be;
Lord Jhonstoune and Lorde Maxwell,
They to schall be with me.

"Swynton, fayre fylde upon your pryde!
To batell make yow bowen
Syr Davy Skotte, Syr Water Stewarde,
Syr Jhon of Agurstone!"

The Perssy cam byfore hys oste,
Wych was ever a gentyll knyght;
Upon the Dowglas lowde can he crye,
"I wyll holde that I have hyght.

"For thou haste brente Northomberlonde,
And done me grete envye;
For thys trespasse thou hast me done,
The tone of us schall dye."

The Dowglas answerde hym agayne,
Wyth grett wurdes upon hye,
And sayd, "I have twenty agaynst thy one
Byholde, and thou maste see."

[1] uncle.

Wyth that the Perssy was grevyd sore,
For soth as I yow saye ;
He lyghted dowyn upon his foote,
And schoote hys horsse clene awaye.

Every man sawe that he dyd soo,
That ryall [1] was ever in rowght ; [2]
Every man schoote hys horsse hym froo,
And light hym rowynde abowght.

Thus Syr Hary Perssye toke the fylde,
For soth as I yow saye ;
Jesu Cryste in hevyn on hyght
Dyd helpe hym well that daye.

But nyne thowzand, ther was no moo,
The cronykle wyll not layne ;
Forty thowsande of Skottes and fowre
That day fowght them agayne.

But when the batell byganne to joyne,
In hast ther cam a knyght ;
The letters fayre furth hath he tayne,
And thus he sayd full ryght :

"My lorde your father he gretes yow well,
Wyth many a noble knyght ;
He desyres yow to byde
That he may see thys fyght.

[1] royal. [2] battle.

"The Baron of Grastoke ys com out of the west,
With hym a noble companye;
All they loge at your fathers thys nyght,
And the batell fayne wolde they see."

"For Jesus love," sayd Syr Harye Perssy,
"That dyed for yow and me,
Wende[1] to my lorde my father agayne,
And saye thow sawe me not with yee.

"My trowth ys plyght to yonne Skottysh knyght,
It nedes me not to layne,
That I schulde byde hym upon thys bent,
And I have hys trowth agayne.

"And if that I weynde of thys growende,
For soth, onfowghten awaye,
He wolde me call but a kowarde knyght
In hys londe another daye.

"Yet had I lever to be rynde and rente,
By Mary, that mykkel maye,
Then ever my manhood schulde be reprovyd[2]
Wyth a Skotte another daye.

"Wherefore schote, archars, for my sake,
And let scharpe arowes flee;
Mynstrells, playe up for your waryson,[3]
And well quyt it schall bee.

[1] go. [2] reproached, disdained. [3] reward.

"Every man thynke on hys trewe-love,
And marke hym to the Trenite;
For to God I make myne avowe
Thys day wyll I not flee."

The blodye harte in the Dowglas armes,
Hys standerde stood on hye,
That every man myght full well knowe;
By syde stode starrës thre.

The whyte lyon on the Ynglyssh perte,
For soth as I yow sayne,
The lucettes and the cressawntes both
The Skottes faught them agayne.

Upon Sent Androwe lowde can they crye,
And thrysse they schowte on hyght,
And syne merked them one owr Ynglysshe men,
As I have tolde yow ryght.

Sent George the brygbt, owr ladyes knygbt,
To name they were full fayne;
Owr Ynglyssh men they cryde on hyght,
And thrysse the schowtte agayne.

Wyth that scharpe arowes bygan to flee,
I tell yow in sertayne;
Men of armes byganne to joyne,
Many a dowghty man was ther slayne.

The Perssy and the Dowglas mette,
That ether of other was fayne;
They swapped together whyll that the swette,
Wyth swordes of fyne collayne:

Tyll the bloode from ther bassonnettes ranne,
As the roke[1] doth in the rayne;
"Yelde the to me," sayd the Dowglas,
"Or elles thow schalt be slayne.

"For I see by thy bryght bassonet,
Thow arte sum man of myght;
And so I do by thy burnysshed brande;
Thow arte an yerle, or elles a knyght."

"By my good faythe," sayd the noble Perssye,
"Now haste thou rede full ryght;
Yet wyll I never yelde me to the,
Whyll I may stonde and fyght."

They swapped together whyll that they swette,
Wyth swordës scharpe and long;
Ych on other so faste they beette,
Tyll ther helmes cam in peyses dowyn.

The Perssy was a man of strength,
I tell yow in thys stounde;
He smote the Dowglas at the swordes length
That he fell to the growynde.

[1] reek, steam.

The sworde was scharpe, and sore can byte,
I tell yow in sertayne;
To the harte he cowde hym smyte,
Thus was the Dowglas slayne.

The stonderdes stode styll on eke a syde,
Wyth many a grevous grone;
Ther they fowght the day, and all the nyght,
And many a dowghty man was slayne.

Ther was no freke that ther wolde flye,
But styffely in stowre can stond,
Ychone hewyng on other whyll they myght drye,
Wyth many a bayllefull bronde.

Ther was slayne upon the Skottës syde,
For soth and sertenly,
Syr James a Dowglas ther was slayne,
That day that he cowde dye.

The yerlle of Mentaye he was slayne,
Grysely groned upon the growynd;
Syr Davy Skotte, Syr Water Stewarde,
Syr John of Agurstoune.

Syr Charllës Morrey in that place,
That never a fote wold flee;
Syr Hewe Maxwell, a lord he was,
Wyth the Dowglas dyd he dye.

Ther was slayne upon the Skottës syde,
For soth as I yow saye,
Of fowre and forty thowsande Scottes
Went but eyghtene awaye.

Ther was slayne upon the Ynglysshe syde,
For soth and sertenlye,
A gentell knyght, Syr John Fitz-hughe,
Yt was the more petye.

Syr James Hardbotell ther was slayne,
For hym ther hartes were sore;
The gentyll Lovell ther was slayne,
That the Perssys standerd bore.

Ther was slayne upon the Ynglyssh perte,
For soth as I yow saye,
Of nyne thowsand Ynglyssh men
Fyve hondert cam awaye.

The other were slayne in the fylde;
Cryste kepe ther sowlles from wo!
Seyng ther was so fewe fryndes
Agaynst so many a foo.

Then on the morne they mayde them beerys
Of byrch and haysell graye;
Many a wydowe, wyth wepyng teyres,
Ther makes they fette awaye.

Thys fraye bygan at Otterborne,
  Bytwene the nyght and the day;
Ther the Dowglas lost hys lyffe,
  And the Perssy was lede awaye.

Then was ther a Scottysh prisoner tayne,
  Syr Hewe Mongomery was hys name;
For soth as I yow saye,
  He borowed the Perssy home agayne.

Now let us all for the Perssy praye
  To Jesu most of myght,
To bring his sowle to the blysse of heven,
  For he was a gentyll knight.

PART TWO

MODERN BALLADS

LOCHINVAR

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide border his steed was the best ;
And, save his good broadsword, he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none ;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late ;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all :
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied ; —
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide —
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, —
"Now tread we a measure ! " said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;

While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran;
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

WALTER SCOTT.

THE EVE OF SAINT JOHN

The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
He spurred his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch
His banner broad to rear ;
He went not 'gainst the English yew
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his platejack was braced, and his helmet was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore,
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,[1]
Full ten pound weight and more.

The Baron returned in three days space,
And his looks were sad and sour ;
And weary was his courser's pace
As he reached his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor
Ran red with English blood ;
Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
'Gainst keen lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,
His acton pierced and tore ;
His ax and his dagger with blood embrued,
But it was not English gore.

[1] battle-ax.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still;
And he whistled thrice for his little footpage,
His name was English Will.

"Come thou hither, my little footpage;
Come hither to my knee;
Though thou art young and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did thy lady do?"

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild watch fold;
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told.

"The bittern clamored from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross,
To the eery beacon hill.

"I watched her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;
No watchman stood by the dreary flame;
It burned all alone.

"The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an armed knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

"And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

"The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain blast was still,
As again I watched the secret pair,
On that lonesome beacon hill.

"And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say 'Come this night to thy lady's bower;
Ask no bold baron's leave.

"'He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she'll undo to her knight so true,
On the eve of good Saint John.'

"'I cannot come; I must not come;
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of Saint John I must wander alone:
In thy bower I must not be.'

"'Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet
Is worth the whole summer's day.

"'And I'll chain the bloodhound, and the warder shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strewed on the stair;
So by the black roodstone, and by holy St. John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!'

"'Though the bloodhound be mute and the rush beneath my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would know.'

"'O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east!
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en,
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slain.'

"He turned him round and grimly he frowned,
Then he laughed right scornfully;
'He who says the massrite for the soul of that knight,
May as well say mass for me.

"'At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power
In thy chamber I will be.'
With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see."

Then changed, I trow, was that bold baron's brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high;
"Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!"

"His arms shone full bright, in the beacon's red light:
His plume it was scarlet and blue;
On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew."

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little footpage,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon tree."

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!
For I heard her name his name;
And that lady bright, she called the knight,
Sir Richard of Coldinghame."

The bold baron's brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale!

"The grave is deep and dark, and the corpse is
stiff and stark,
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drowned the name;
For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks
do ring
For Richard of Coldinghame."

He passed the court gate, and he ope'd the tower
grate,
And he mounted the narrow stair
To the bartizan seat, where, with maids that on her
wait
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;
Looked over hill and dale;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"
"Now hail, thou baron true!
What news, what news from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"

"The Ancram moor is red with gore,
For many a southron fell;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."

The lady blushed red, but nothing she said;
Nor added the baron a word:
Then she stepped down the stair to her chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the baron tossed and turned,
And oft to himself he said,
"The worms around him creep, and his bloody grave is deep.
It cannot give up the dead."

It was near the ringing of matin bell,
The night was well-nigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that baron fell
On the eve of good St. John.

The lady looked through the chamber fair,
By the light of a dying flame,
And she was aware of a knight stood there,
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

"Alas! away, away!" she cried,
"For the holy virgin's sake!"
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side;
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain;
The mass and the death prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the baron's brand, near Tweed's fair strand,
Most foully slain I fell;
And my restless sprite on the beacon's height,
For a space is bound to dwell.

"At our trysting place, for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro;
But I had not the power to come to thy bower,
Hadst thou not conjured me so."

Love mastered fear: her brow she crossed;
"How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved, or art thou lost?"
The vision shook his head!

"Who spilleth life shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe;
That lawless love is guilt above
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam;
His right upon her hand;
The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four
Remains on that board impressed ;
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering for her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne'er looks upon the sun ;
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne'er beholds the day,
That monk, who speaks to none,
That nun was Smaylho'me's lady gay,
That monk the bold baron.

WALTER SCOTT.

JOCK JOHNSTONE THE TINKLER

"O, came ye ower by the Yoke-burn Ford,
Or down by the King's Road of the cleuch ?
Or saw ye a knight and a lady bright,
Wha ha'e gane the gait they baith shall rue ?"

"I saw a knight and a lady bright
Ride up the cleuch at the break of day ;
The knight upon a coal-black steed,
And the dame on one of the silver gray.

"And the lady's palfrey flew the first,
With many a clang of silver bell:
Swift as the raven's morning flight
The two went scouring ower the fell.

"By this time they are man and wife,
And standing in St. Mary's fane;
And the lady in the grass-green silk
A maid you will never see again."

"But I can tell thee, saucy wight, —
And that the runaway shall prove, —
Revenge to a Douglas is as sweet
As maiden's charms or maiden's love."

"Since thou say'st that, my Lord Douglas,
Good faith some clinking there will be;
Beshrew my heart, but and my sword,
If I winna turn and ride with thee."

They whipped out over the Shepherd Cleuch,
And doun the links o' the Corsecleuch Burn;
And aye the Douglas swore by his sword
To win his love, or ne'er return.

"First fight your rival, Lord Douglas,
And then brag after, if you may;
For the Earl of Ross is as brave a lord
As ever gave good weapon sway.

"But I for ae poor siller merk,
Or thirteen pennies and a bawbee,
Will tak in hand to fight you baith,
Or beat the winner, whiche'er it be."

The Douglas turned him on his steed,
And I wat a loud laughter leuch he :
"Of a' the fools I have ever met,
Man, I ha'e never met ane like thee.

"Art thou akin to lord or knight,
Or courtly squire or warrior leal?"
"I am a tinkler," quo' the wight,
"But I like crown-cracking unco' well."

When they came to St. Mary's kirk,
The chaplain shook for very fear;
And aye he kissed the cross and said,
"What deevil has sent that Douglas here?

"He neither values book nor ban,
But curses all without demur;
And cares nae mair for a holy man
Than I do for a worthless cur."

"Come here, thou bland and brittle priest,
And tell to me without delay
Where you have hid the lord of Ross
And the lady that came at the break of day."

"No knight or lady, good Lord Douglas,
Have I beheld since break of morn;
And I never saw the lord of Ross
Since the woeful day that I was born."

Lord Douglas turned him round about,
And looked the Tinkler in the face;
Where he beheld a lurking smile
And a deevil of a dour grimace.

"How's this, how's this, thou Tinkler loon?
Hast thou presumed to lie on me?"
"Faith that I have!" the Tinkler said,
"And a right good turn I have done to thee.

"For the lord of Ross, and thy own true-love,
The beauteous Harriet of Thirlestane,
Rade west away, ere the break of day;
And you'll never see the dear maid again.

"So I thought it best to bring you here,
On a wrong scent of my own accord;
For had you met the Johnstone clan,
They wad ha'e made mince-meat of a lord."

At that the Douglas was so wroth
He wist not what to say or do;
But he strake the Tinkler o'er the crown,
Till the blood came dreeping ower his brow.

"Beshrew my heart," quo' the Tinkler lad,
"Thou bear'st thee most ungallantly!
If these are the manners of a lord,
They are manners that winna gang down wi' me."

"Hold up thy hand," the Douglas cried,
"And keep thy distance, Tinkler loon!"
"That will I not," the Tinkler said,
"Though I and my mare should both go down!"

"I have armor on," cried the Lord Douglas,
"Cuirass and helm, as you may see."
"The deil me care!" quo' the Tinkler lad;
"I shall have a skelp at them and thee."

"You are not horsed," quo' the Lord Douglas,
"And no remorse this weapon brooks."
"Mine's a good right yaud,"[1] quo' the Tinkler lad,
"And a great deal better than she looks.

"So stand to thy weapons, thou haughty lord,
What I have taken I needs must give;
Thou shalt never strike a tinkler again,
For the longest day thou hast to live."

Then to it they fell, both sharp and snell,
Till the fire from both their weapons flew;
But the very first shock that they met with,
The Douglas his rashness 'gan to rue.

For though he had on a sack of mail,
And a cuirass on his breast wore he,
With a good steel bonnet on his head,
Yet the blood ran trickling to his knee.

[1] jade, mare.

The Douglas sat upright and firm,
Aye as together their horses ran ;
But the Tinkler laid on like a very deil,—
Siccan strokes were never laid on by man.

"Hold up thy hand, thou Tinkler loon,"
Cried the poor priest, with whining din ;
"If thou hurt the brave Lord James Douglas,
A curse be on thee and all thy kin ! "

"I care no more for Lord James Douglas
Than Lord James Douglas cares for me ;
But I want to let his proud heart know
That a tinkler's a man as well as he."

So they fought on and they fought on,
Till good Lord Douglas' breath was gone ;
And the Tinkler bore him to the ground,
With rush, with rattle, and with groan.

"O hon ! O hon ! " cried the proud Douglas,
"That I this day should have lived to see !
For sure my honor I have lost,
And a leader again I can never be !

"But tell me of thy kith and kin,
And where was bred thy weapon hand ?
For thou art the wale of tinkler loons
That ever was born in fair Scotland."

"My name's Jock Johnstone," quo' the wight;
"I winna keep my name frae thee;
And here tak thou thy sword again,
And better friends we two shall be."

But the Douglas swore a solemn oath,
That was a debt he could never owe;
He would rather die at the back of the dike
Than owe his sword to a man so low.

"But if thou wilt ride under my banner,
And bear my livery and my name,
My right-hand warrior thou shalt be,
And I'll knight thee on the field of fame."

"Woe worth[1] thy wit, good Lord Douglas,
To think I'd change my trade for thine;
Far better and wiser would you be,
To live a journeyman of mine,

"To mend a kettle or a casque,
Or cloat a good-wife's yettling-pan,—
Upon my life, good Lord Douglas,
You'd make a noble tinkler-man!

"I would give you drammock twice a day,
And sunkets on a Sunday morn,
And you should be a rare adept
In steel and copper and brass and horn!

[1] be to.

"I'll fight you every day you rise,
Till you can act the hero's part;
Therefore, I pray you, think of this,
And lay it seriously to heart."

The Douglas writhed beneath the lash,
Answering with an inward curse,—
Like salmon wriggling on a spear,
That makes his deadly wound the worse.

But up there came two squires renowned;
In search of Lord Douglas they came;
And when they saw their master down,
Their spirits mounted in a flame.

And they flew upon the Tinkler wight,
Like perfect tigers on their prey:
But the Tinkler heaved his trusty sword
And made him ready for the fray.

"Come one to one, ye coward knaves,—
Come hand to hand, and steed to steed;
I would that ye were better men,
For this is glorious work indeed!"

Before you could have counted twelve,
The Tinkler's wonderous chivalrye
Had both the squires upon the sward,
And their horses galloping o'er the lea.

The Tinkler tied them neck and heel,
And mony a biting jest gave he:
"O fie for shame!" said the Tinkler lad;
"Siccan fighters I did never see."

He slit one of their bridle reins,—
O, what disgrace the conquered feels,—
And he skelpit the squires with that good tawse,
Till the blood ran off at baith their heels.

The Douglas he was forced to laugh
Till down his cheek the salt tear ran;
"I think the deevil he come here
In the likeness of a tinkler man!"

Then he has to Lord Douglas gone,
And he raised him kindly by the hand,
And he set him on his gallant steed,
And bore him away to Henderland.

"Be not cast down, my Lord Douglas,
Nor writhe beneath a broken bane;
For the leech's art will mend the part,
And your honor lost will spring again.

"'Tis true, Jock Johnstone is my name;
I'm a right good tinkler as you see;
For I can crack a casque betimes
Or clout one, as my need may be.

"Jock Johnstone is my name, 'tis true,—
But noble hearts are allied to me;
For I am the lord of Annandale,
And a knight and earl as well as thee."

Then Douglas strained the hero's hand,
And took from it his sword again:
"Since thou art the lord of Annandale,
Thou hast eased my heart of meikle pain.

"I might have known thy noble form
In that disguise thou'rt pleased to wear;
All Scotland knows thy matchless aim,
And England by experience dear.

"We have been foes as well as friends,
And jealous of each other's sway;
But little can I comprehend
Thy motives for these pranks to-day."

"Sooth, my good lord, the truth to tell,
'Twas I that stole your love away,
And gave her to the lord of Ross
An hour before the break of day.

"For the lord of Ross is my brother,
By all the laws of chivalrye;
And I brought with me a thousand men
To guard him to my ain countrye.

"But I thought meet to stay behind,
And try your lordship to waylay,
Resolved to breed some noble sport
By leading you so far astray.

"Judging it better some lives to spare,—
Which fancy takes me, now and then,—
And settle our quarrel hand to hand,
Than each with our ten thousand men.

"God send you soon, my Lord Douglas,
To Border foray sound and haill!
But never strike a tinkler again,
If he be a Johnstone of Annandale."

JAMES HOGG.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

No stir in the air, no sound in the sea —
The ship was still as she might be;
Her sails from heaven received no motion;
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock
The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock;
So little they rose, so little they fell
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The holy Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had floated that bell on the Inchcape Rock;
On the waves of the storm it floated and swung,
And louder and louder its warning rung.

When the rock was hid by the tempest's swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous rock,
And blessed the priest of Aberbrothok.

The sun in heaven shone so gay —
All things were joyful on that day;
The seabirds screamed as they sported round,
And there was pleasure in their sound.

The float of the Inchcape Bell was seen,
A darker speck on the ocean green;
Sir Ralph the Rover walked his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of Spring —
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess;
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the bell and float:
Quoth he, "My men, pull out the boat;
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the priest of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And cut the warning bell from the float.

Down sank the bell with a gurgling sound;
The bubbles rose, and burst around.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the rock
Will not bless the priest of Aberbrothok."

Sir Ralph the Rover sailed away —
He scoured the seas for many a day;
And now, grown rich with plundered store,
He steers his course to Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky,
They could not see the sun on high;
The wind had blown a gale all day;
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand;
So dark it is, they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising moon."

"Canst hear," said one, "the breaker's roar?
For yonder, methinks, should be the shore.
Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish we could hear the Inchcape Bell."

They hear no sound; the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen they drift along;
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock —
O, Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair;
He beat himself in wild despair.
The waves rush in on every side;
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But ever in his dying fear
One dreadful sound he seemed to hear, —
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell
The evil spirit was ringing his knell.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

"O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

"O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

"I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too."

"I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful — a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

"I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too and fragrant zone:
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

"I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

"She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and fragrant dew,
And sure in language strange she said —
'I love thee true.'

"She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

"And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed — Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill's side.

"I saw pale kings and princes, too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
They cried, 'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

"I saw their starved lips in the gloom,
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

"And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing."

JOHN KEATS.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

It was the schooner Hesperus
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper has taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke, now west, now south.

Then up and spake an old sailor
Had sailed the Spanish main:
"I pray thee put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the northeast;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light;
O say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That saved she might be;
And she thought of Christ who stilled the waves
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between,
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
  She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
  Like icicles, from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
  Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks they gored her side
  Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
  With the mast went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass she stove and sank —
  Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
  A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
  Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
  The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair like the brown seaweed,
  On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
  In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
  On the reef of Norman's Woe!

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THE EXILES

1660

The goodman sat beside his door
One sultry afternoon,
With his young wife singing at his side
An old and goodly tune.

A glimmer of heat was in the air, —
The dark green woods were still ;
And the skirts of a heavy thunder-cloud
Hung over the western hill.

Black, thick, and vast arose that cloud
Above the wilderness,
As some dark world from upper air
Were stooping over this.

At times the solemn thunder pealed,
And all was still again,
Save a low murmur in the air
Of coming wind and rain.

Just as the first big rain-drop fell,
A weary stranger came,
And stood before the farmer's door,
With travel soiled and lame.

Sad seemed he, yet sustaining hope
Was in his quiet glance,
And peace, like autumn's moonlight, clothed
His tranquil countenance.

A look, like that his Master wore
In Pilate's council-hall :
It told of wrongs, — but of a love
Meekly forgiving all.

"Friend ! wilt thou give me shelter here ? "
The stranger meekly said ;
And, leaning on his oaken staff,
The goodman's features read.

"My life is hunted, — evil men
Are following in my track ;
The traces of the torturer's whip
Are on my aged back.

"And much, I fear, 'twill peril thee
Within thy doors to take
A hunted seeker of the Truth,
Oppressed for conscience' sake."

O, kindly spoke the goodman's wife, —
"Come in, old man ! " quoth she, —
"We will not leave thee to the storm,
Whoever thou mayst be."

Then came the aged wanderer in,
And silent sat him down ;
While all within grew dark as night
Beneath the storm-cloud's frown.

But while the sudden lightning's blaze
Filled every cottage nook,
And with the jarring thunder-roll
The loosened casements shook,

A heavy tramp of horses' feet
Came sounding up the lane,
And half a score of horse, or more,
Came plunging through the rain.

"Now, Goodman Macey, ope thy door, —
We would not be house-breakers;
A rueful deed thou'st done this day,
In harboring banished Quakers."

Out looked the cautious goodman then,
With much of fear and awe,
For there, with broad wig drenched with rain,
The parish priest he saw.

"Open thy door, thou wicked man,
And let thy pastor in,
And give God thanks, if forty stripes
Repay thy deadly sin."

"What seek ye?" quoth the goodman, —
"The stranger is my guest:
He is worn with toil and grievous wrong, —
Pray let the old man rest."

"Now, out upon thee, canting knave!"
And strong hands shook the door.
"Believe me, Macey," quoth the priest, —
"Thou'lt rue thy conduct sore."

Then kindled Macey's eye of fire:
"No priest who walks the earth,
Shall pluck away the stranger-guest
Made welcome to my hearth."

Down from his cottage wall he caught
The matchlock, hotly tried
At Preston-pans and Marston-moor,
By fiery Ireton's side;

Where Puritan, and Cavalier,
With shout and psalm contended;
And Rupert's oath, and Cromwell's prayer,
With battle-thunder blended.

Up rose the ancient stranger then:
"My spirit is not free
To bring the wrath and violence
Of evil men on thee:

"And for thyself, I pray forbear, —
Bethink thee of thy Lord,
Who healed again the smitten ear,
And sheathed his follower's sword.

"I go, as to the slaughter led :
Friends of the poor, farewell ! "
Beneath his hand the oaken door
Back on its hinges fell.

"Come forth, old graybeard, yea and nay,"
The reckless scoffers cried,
As to a horseman's saddle-bow
The old man's arms were tied.

And of his bondage hard and long
In Boston's crowded jail,
Where suffering woman's prayer was heard,
With sickening childhood's wail,

It suits not with our tale to tell :
Those scenes have passed away, —
Let the dim shadows of the past
Brood o'er that evil day.

"Ho, sheriff ! " quoth the ardent priest, —
"Take Goodman Macey too ;
The sin of this day's heresy
His back or purse shall rue."

"Now, goodwife, haste thee ! " Macey cried,
She caught his manly arm : —
Behind, the parson urged pursuit,
With outcry and alarm.

Ho! speed the Maceys, neck or naught, —
The river-course was near : —
The plashing on its pebbled shore
Was music to their ear.

A gray rock, tasseled o'er with birch,
Above the waters hung,
And at its base, with every wave,
A small light wherry swung.

A leap — they gain the boat — and there
The goodman wields his oar :
"Ill luck betide them all," — he cried, —
"The laggards upon the shore."

Down through the crashing underwood,
The burly sheriff came : —
"Stand, Goodman Macey, — yield thyself ;
Yield in the King's own name."

"Now out upon thy hangman's face ! "
Bold Macey answered then, —
"Whip *women*, on the village green,
But meddle not with *men*."

The priest came panting to the shore, —
His grave cocked hat was gone :
Behind him, like some owl's nest, hung
His wig upon a thorn.

"Come back, — come back!" the parson cried,
"The church's curse beware."
"Curse, an' thou wilt," said Macey, "but
Thy blessing prithee spare."

"Vile scoffer!" cried the baffled priest, —
"Thou'lt yet the gallows see."
"Who's born to be hanged, will not be drowned,"
Quoth Macey, merrily;

"And so, sir sheriff and priest, good by!"
He bent him to his oar,
And the small boat glided quietly
From the twain upon the shore.

Now in the west, the heavy clouds
Scattered and fell asunder,
While feebler came the rush of rain,
And fainter growled the thunder.

And through the broken clouds, the sun
Looked out serene and warm,
Painting its holy symbol-light
Upon the passing storm.

O, beautiful! that rainbow span,
O'er dim Crane-neck was bended; —
One bright foot touched the eastern hills,
And one with ocean blended.

By green Pentucket's southern slope
The small boat glided fast, —
The watchers of "the Block-house" saw
The strangers as they passed.

That night a stalwart garrison
Sat shaking in their shoes,
To hear the dip of Indian oars, —
The glide of birch canoes.

The fisher-wives of Salisbury,
(The men were all away,)
Looked out to see the stranger oar
Upon their waters play.

Deer-Island's rocks and fir-trees threw
Their sunset-shadows o'er them,
And Newbury's spire and weathercock
Peered o'er the pines before them.

Around the Black Rocks, on their left,
The marsh lay broad and green ;
And on their right, with dwarf shrubs crowned,
Plum Island's hills were seen.

With skillful hand and wary eye
The harbor-bar was crossed ; —
A plaything of the restless wave,
The boat on ocean tossed.

The glory of the sunset heaven
On land and water lay, —
On the steep hills of Agawam,
On cape, and bluff, and bay.

They passed the gray rocks of Cape Ann,
And Gloucester's harbor-bar ;
The watch-fire of the garrison
Shone like a setting star.

How brightly broke the morning
On Massachusetts Bay !
Blue wave, and bright green island,
Rejoicing in the day.

On passed the bark in safety
Round isle and headland steep, —
No tempest broke above them,
No fog-cloud veiled the deep.

Far round the bleak and stormy Cape
The vent'rous Macey passed,
And on Nantucket's naked isle
Drew up his boat at last.

And how, in log-built cabin,
They braved the rough sea-weather ;
And there, in peace and quietness,
Went down life's vale together :

How others drew around them,
And how their fishing sped,
Until to every wind of heaven
Nantucket's sails were spread;

How pale want alternated
With plenty's golden smile;
Behold, is it not written
In the annals of the isle?

And yet that isle remaineth
A refuge of the free,
As when true-hearted Macey
Beheld it from the sea.

Free as the winds that winnow
Her shrubless hills of sand, —
Free as the waves that batter
Along her yielding land.

Than hers, at duty's summons,
No loftier spirit stirs, —
Nor falls o'er human suffering
A readier tear than hers.

God bless the sea-beat island! —
And grant for evermore,
That charity and freedom dwell
As now upon her shore.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM

'Twas in the prime of summer time,
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Came bounding out of school;
There were some that ran, and some that leapt
Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds
And souls untouched by sin;
To a level mead they came, and there
They drave the wickets in;
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about
And shouted as they ran,
Turning to mirth all things of earth
As only boyhood can;
But the usher sat remote from all
A melancholy man.

His hat was off, his vest apart
To catch heaven's blessed breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease;
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees.

Leaf after leaf he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside, —
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide ;
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome ;
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strained the dusky covers close
And fixed the brazen hasp.
" Oh God ! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp ! "

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took, —
Now up the mead, now down the mead,
And past a shady nook, —
And lo ! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book..

" My gentle lad, what is't you read,
Romance or fairy fable ?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable ? "
The young boy gave an upward glance, —
" It is ' The Death of Abel.' "

The usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain, —

Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again ;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked to him of Cain ;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves ;
And lonely folk cut off unseen
And hid in lonely graves ;
And horrid stabs in groves forlorn ;
And murders done in caves ;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod ;
Ay, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod ;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God.

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain ;
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain.

" And well," quoth he, " I know for truth
Their pangs must be extreme —
Woe, woe, unutterable woe ! —
Who spill life's sacred stream.

For why? Methought, last night I wrought
A murder, in a dream!

"One that had never done me wrong, —
A feeble man and old;
I led him to a lonely field, —
The moon shone clear and cold:
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold!

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife, —
And then the deed was done;
There was nothing lying at my feet
But lifeless flesh and bone!

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone
That could not do me ill;
And yet I feared him all the more
For lying there so still;
There was a manhood in his look
That murder could not kill!

"And lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame, —
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame:
I took the dead man by the hand
And called upon his name

"O God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain;
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood gushed out amain!
For every clot a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain!

"My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul I knew
Was at the Devil's price.
A dozen times I groaned, — the dead
Had never groaned but twice.

"And now from forth the frowning sky,
From the heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice, — the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite:
'Thou guilty man! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight!'

"And I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream, —
The sluggish water black as ink,
The depth was so extreme:
My gentle boy remember this
Was nothing but a dream.

"Down went the corse with a mighty plunge,
And vanished in the pool;

Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young
That evening, in the school.

"O Heaven! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in evening hymn;
Like a devil of the pit I seemed,
Mid holy cherubim!

"And Peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread;
But Guilt was my grim chamberlain,
That lighted me to bed,
And drew my midnight curtains round
With fingers bloody red!

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep;
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at Sleep;
For Sin had rendered unto her
The keys of hell to keep.

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime;
With one besetting horrid hint
That racked me all the time,—

A mighty yearning like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime,—

"One stern tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave!
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,—
Still urging me to go and see
The dead man in his grave!

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursed pool
With a wild misgiving eye;
And I saw the dead in the river-bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing,
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran;
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began,—
In a lonesome wood with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murdered man!

"And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was otherwhere ;
As soon as the midday task was done,
In secret I was there, —
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare !

"Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep, —
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging sprite,
Till blood for blood atones !
Ay, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh, —
The world shall see his bones !

"O God ! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake !
Again — again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take ;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay
Will wave or mold allow ;

The horrid thing pursues my soul, —
It stands before me now!"
The fearful boy looked up and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin's eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

THOMAS HOOD.

THE REVENGE

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came flying from far away:
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?"

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know you
are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them
again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick
ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them,
my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of
Spain."

III

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships of
war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer
heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from
the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were
not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of
the Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship
and to fight,

And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet."

V

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we roared a hurrah, and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little Revenge ran on through the long sea lane between.

VI

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from their decks and laughed,

Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad
little craft
Running on and on, till delayed
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen
hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawn-
ing tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

VII

And while now the great San Philip hung above
us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the
starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought
herself and went
Having that within her womb that had left her ill
content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought
us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and
musqueteers,

And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that
shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out
far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one
and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-
built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her
battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back
with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shattered, and
so could fight us no more —
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the
world before?

X

For he said "Fight on! fight on!"
Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short sum-
mer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left the
deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it sud-
denly dead,

And himself he was wounded again in the side and
the head,
And he said "Fight on! fight on!"

XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out
far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round
us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they feared
that we still could sting,
So they watched what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maimed for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate
strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of
them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the
powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over
the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,

We die — does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"

XII

And the gunner said "Ay, ay," but the seamen made reply:
"We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow."
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so
valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so
cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his
English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught
they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down into the
deep,
And they manned the Revenge with a swarthier
alien crew,
And away she sailed with her loss and longed for
her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruined awoke
from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to
moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an
earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and
their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-
shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down by the
island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

SISTER HELEN

"Why did you melt your waxen man,
Sister Helen?
To-day is the third since you began."
"The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But if you have done your work aright,
Sister Helen,
You'll let me play, for you said I might."
"Be very still in your play to-night,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven!)

"You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,
Sister Helen;
If now it be molten, all is well."
"Even so, — nay, peace! you cannot tell,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
O what is this, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,
Sister Helen;
How like dead folk he has dropped away!"

"Nay now, of the dead what can you say,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven?)

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,
Sister Helen,
Shines through the thinned wax red as blood!"
"Nay now, when looked you yet on blood,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick and sore,
Sister Helen,
And I'll play without the gallery door."
"Aye, let me rest, — I'll lie on the floor,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Here high up in the balcony,
Sister Helen,
The moon flies face to face with me."
"Aye, look and say whatever you see,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,
Sister Helen;
In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."
"Hush, heard you a horse-tread as you spake,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,
Sister Helen,
Three horsemen that ride terribly."
"Little brother, whence come the three,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Whence should they come, between Hell and Heaven?)

"They come by the hill-verge from Boyne Bar,
Sister Helen,
And one draws nigh, but two are afar."
"Look, look, do you know them who they are,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Who should they be, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white mane on the blast."
"The hour has come, has come at last,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He has made a sign and called Halloo!
Sister Helen,
And he says that he would speak with you."
"Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Why laughs she thus, between Hell and Heaven?)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry,
Sister Helen,
That Keith of Ewern's like to die."
"And he and they, and thou and I,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
And they and we, between Hell and Heaven!)

"For three days now he has lain abed,
Sister Helen,
And he prays in torment to be dead."
"The thing may chance, if he have prayed,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
If he have prayed, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,
Sister Helen,
That you should take your curse away."
"*My* prayer was heard, — he need but pray,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?)

"But he says, till you take back your ban,
Sister Helén,
His soul would pass, yet never can."
"Nay then, shall I slay a living man,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But he calls forever on your name,
Sister Helen,
And says that he melts before a flame."
"My heart for his pleasure fared the same,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white plume on the blast."
"The hour, the sweet hour I forecast,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his horse,
Sister Helen;
But his words are drowned in the wind's course."
"Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear perforce,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
A word ill heard, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,
Sister Helen,
Is ever to see you ere he die."
"He sees me in earth, in moon and sky,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Earth, moon, and sky, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,
Sister Helen,
And bids you mind the banks of Boyne."
"What else he broke will he ever join,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Oh, never more, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He yields you these and craves full fain,
Sister Helen,
You pardon him in his mortal pain."
"What else he took will he give again,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
No more, no more, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He calls your name in an agony,
Sister Helen,
That even dead Love must weep to see."
"Hate, born of Love, is blind as he,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Love turned to hate, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white hair on the blast."
"The short, short hour will soon be past,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Will soon be past, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,
Sister Helen,
But oh! his voice is sad and weak!"
"What here should the mighty Baron seek,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,
Sister Helen,
The body dies but the soul shall live."
"Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
As she forgives, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would rive,
Sister Helen,
To save his dear son's soul alive."
"Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,
Sister Helen,
To go with him for the love of God!"
"The way is long to his son's abode,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
The way is long, between Hell and Heaven!)

"O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,
Sister Helen!
More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."
"No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
His dying knell, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,
Sister Helen;
Is it in the sky or in the ground?"
"Say, have they turned their horses round,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What would she more, between Hell and Heaven?)

"They have raised the old man from his knee,
Sister Helen,
And they ride in silence hastily."
"More fast the naked soul doth flee,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
The naked soul, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,
Sister Helen,
And weary sad they look by the hill."
"But he and I are sadder still,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!)

"See, see, the wax has dropped from its place,
Sister Helen,
And the flames are winning up apace!"
"Yet there they burn but for a space,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Ah! what white thing at the door has cross'd,
Sister Helen?
Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?"
"A soul that's lost as mine is lost,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven!)

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the
twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great
Judgment Seat;

But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride:
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar,
"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.
At dusk he harries the Abazai — at dawn he is into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai,

But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men.
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,
And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man is seen."
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough dun was he,
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of hell, and the head of the gallows tree.
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat —
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the Tongue of Jagai,
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show now if ye can ride."
It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-devils go,

The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare
like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his
head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as
a maiden plays with a glove.
There was rock to the left and rock to the right,
and low lean thorn between,
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho' never
a man was seen.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky,
their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course — in a woful
heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and
pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand —
small room was there to strive,
"'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he, "ye
rode so long alive:
There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was
not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his rifle
cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held
it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast, were feasting
all in a row:

If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly."
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do good to bird and beast,
But count who come for the broken meats before thou makest a feast,
If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than a thief could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their men on the garnered grain,
The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all the cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair, — thy brethren wait to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, — howl, dog, and call them up!
And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and gear and stack,
Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight my own way back!"
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when wolf and gray wolf meet.
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath;

What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold by the blood of my clan:
Take up the mare for my father's gift — by God, she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against his breast,
"We be two strong men," said Kamal then, "but she loveth the younger best.
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."
The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for the risk of a limb.
Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain-crest —
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder rides.

Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,
Thy life is his — thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.
So thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,
And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Borderline,
And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to power —
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged in Peshawur."
They have looked each other between the eyes, and there they found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on leavened bread and salt:
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the Wondrous Names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty swords flew clear —
There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's son. "Put up the steel at your sides!

Last night ye had struck at a Border thief — to-night 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the two shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at 'God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth.

PART THREE

LONGER POEMS OF BALLAD CHARACTER

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

PART I

An ancient Mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
Mayst hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye —
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three-years child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light-house top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon" —
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner:

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

"And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

The ship, drawn by a storm toward the South Pole.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold;
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen;
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around: [howled,
It cracked and growled, and roared and
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross;
Through the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward, through fog and floating ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner,
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! —
Why look'st thou so?" — "With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II

The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe;
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared off, they justified the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist.
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean and sails

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;

northward, even till it reaches the Line.

We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning which the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so:
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah, well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner; in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

PART III

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
A flash of joy; Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

See! see! (I cried), she tacks no more.
Hither to work us weal, —
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well-nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other, on board the skeleton ship.

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:

Like vessel, like crew.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The night-mare, Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won, I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of the Moon,

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip, —
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,

Each turned his face with a ghastly
pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His shipmates drop down dead;

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan,)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly, —
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

PART IV

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him;

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long and lank, and brown
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown."

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to Hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that

Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country, and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside:

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay
The charmèd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire;
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:

A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware :
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

He blesseth them in his heart.

The spell begins to break.

The self-same moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

O sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck
That had so long remained,
I dreamed that they were filled with dew ;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank ;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
I was so light, — almost

I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspirited, and the ship moves on;

Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools, —
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me." —

But not by the souls of the men, nor by dæmons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!" —
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned, they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

by the invocation of the guardian saint.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome spirit from the south pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid : and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune.
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean :
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion, —
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound :
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-dæmons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong ; and two of them

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two Voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By Him Who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing, —
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the Ocean doing?'

Second Voice

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast, —

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.

See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:

I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen, —

The curse is finally expiated.

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek,
Like a meadow-gale of Spring, —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze, —
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
The light-house top I see ?
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray, —
Oh, let me be awake, my God !
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn !
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock :
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were :
I turned my eyes upon the deck, —
O Christ ! what saw I there ?

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

And appear in their own forms of light.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light ;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand ;
No voice did they impart, —
No voice ; but, oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast :
Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third, — I heard his voice ;
It is the Hermit good !
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

The Hermit of the wood.

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve, —
He hath a cushion plump;
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said,
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,

And the owlet whoops to the wolf below
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look'
(The Pilot made reply),
'I am afeared.' — 'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips, — the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha, ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

'O, shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!' —
The Hermit crossed his brow. —
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say, —
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and anon throughout his future

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;

And, till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The Wedding-Guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark! the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O, sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

And to teach by his own example love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest, —
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

THE BATTLE OF FLODDEN FIELD

FROM "MARMION"

BY WALTER SCOTT

Not far advanced was morning day,
When Marmion did his troop array
To Surrey's camp to ride;
He had safe conduct for his band,
Beneath the Royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide:
The ancient Earl, with stately grace,
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whispered in an undertone,
"Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."—
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopped to bid adieu:—
"Though something I might plain," he said,
"Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your King's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I staid;
Part we in friendship from your land,
And, noble Earl, receive my hand."—
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke:
"My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
Be open, at my Sovereign's will,
To each one whom he lists, howe'er
Unmeet to be the owner's peer.

My castles are my King's alone,
From turret to foundation-stone —
The hand of Douglas is his own ;
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp." —

Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And — "This to me!" he said, —
"An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head!
And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,
He, who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate :
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
Even in thy pitch of pride,
Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,
(Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword,)
I tell thee, thou'rt defied!
And if thou said'st, I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or Highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied!" —
On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age :
Fierce he broke forth, — "And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,

The Douglas in his hall?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go? —
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no!
Up drawbridge, grooms — what, Warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall." —
Lord Marmion turned, — well was his need,
And dashed the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous grate behind him rung:
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars descending razed his plume.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise;
Nor lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim:
And when Lord Marmion reached his band,
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
"Horse! horse!" the Douglas cried, "and chase!"
But soon he reined his fury's pace:
"A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name. —
A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed!
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the King praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line:

So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill. —
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.
'Tis pity of him too," he cried:
"Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,
I warrant him a warrior tried."
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle halls.

The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They crossed the heights of Stanrigmoor.
His troop more closely there he scanned,
And missed the Palmer from the band. —
"Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
"He parted at the peep of day;
Good sooth, it was in strange array." —
"In what array?" said Marmion, quick.
"My Lord, I ill can spell the trick;
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And from a loop-hole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,
Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,

By Archibald won in bloody work,
Against the Saracen and Turk :
Last night it hung not in the hall ;
I thought some marvel would befall.
And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the Earl's best steed ;
A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the Sheriff Sholto say,
The Earl did much the Master pray
To use him on the battle-day ;
But he preferred " —— " Nay, Henry, cease !
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace. —
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain — I pray
What did Blount see at break of day ? " —

" In brief, my lord, we both descried
(For then I stood by Henry's side,)
The Palmer mount, and outwards ride
Upon the Earl's own favorite steed :
All sheathed he was in armor bright,
And much resembled that same knight,
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight :
Lord Angus wished him speed." —
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke ; —
" Ah ! dastard fool, to reason lost ! "
He muttered ; " 'Twas nor fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mold. —

O dotage blind and gross !
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross. —
How stand we now ? he told his tale
To Douglas ; and with some avail ;
'Twas therefore gloomed his rugged brow. —
Will Surrey dare to entertain,
'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain ?
Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun ;
Must separate Constance from the Nun —
O, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive !
A Palmer too ! no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye :
I might have known there was but one,
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reached, at eve, the Tweed,
Where Lennel's convent closed their march ;
(There now is left but one frail arch,
Yet mourn thou not its cells ;
Our time a fair exchange has made ;
Hard by, in hospitable shade,
A reverend pilgrim dwells,
Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)
Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there

Give Marmion entertainment fair,
And lodging for his train and Clare.
Next morn the Baron climbed the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
  Encamped on Flodden edge :
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
  Along the dusky ridge.
Lord Marmion looked : — at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry
  Amid the shifting lines :
The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For, flashing on the hedge of spears
  The eastern sunbeam shines.
Their front now deepening, now extending ;
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know,
They watched the motions of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
  The Scotch beheld the English host
  Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
  And heedful watched them as they crossed
The Till by Twisel Bridge.
  High sight it is, and haughty, while
  They dive into the deep defile ;
  Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,
  Beneath the castle's airy wall.

By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing ;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see ;
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel ! thy rock's deep echo rang ;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen ! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden ! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile ?
What checks the fiery soul of James ?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,

His host Lord Surrey lead?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand? —
O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry — "Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockbourne! —
The precious hour has passed in vain,
And England's host has gained the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden hill.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
"Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
And see ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon: — hap what hap,
My basnet to a prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till! —
Yet more! yet more! — how far arrayed
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armor flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly." —

"Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, "thou'dst best,
And listen to our lord's behest."
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said, —
"This instant be our band arrayed;
The river must be quickly crossed,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
If fight King James, — as well I trust
That fight he will, and fight he must,
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins."

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu;
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And muttered, as the flood they view,
"The pheasant in the falcon's claw
He scarce will yield to please a daw:
Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately.
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,

Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven perforce,
The southern bank they gain ;
Behind them straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train :
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain ;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharmed should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion staid,
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a Cross of Stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command.

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host for deadly fray ;
Their marshalled lines stretched east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation passed
From the loud cannon mouth ;
Not in the close successive rattle,
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between. —
The hillock gained, Lord Marmion staid :
" Here, by this Cross," he gently said,
" You well may view the scene,
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare :

O ! think of Marmion in thy prayer ! —
Thou wilt not ? — well, — no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare. —
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
With ten picked archers of my train ;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain. —
But if we conquer, cruel maid,
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again."
He waited not for answer there,
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire ; but spurred amain,
And, dashing through the battle plain,
His way to Surrey took.

" — The good Lord Marmion, by my life !
Welcome to danger's hour ! —
Short greeting serves in time of strife : —
Thus have I ranged my power ;
Myself will rule this central host,
Stout Stanley fronts their right,
My sons command the vanward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight ;
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rearward of the fight,
And succor those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
Would gladly to the vanguard go ;

Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
With thee their charge will blithely share ;
There fight thine own retainers too,
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true." —
" Thanks, noble Surrey ! " Marmion said,
Nor farther greeting there he paid ;
But, parting like a thunderbolt,
First in the vanguard made a halt,
Where such a shout there rose
Of " Marmion ! Marmion ! " that the cry,
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
Startled the Scottish foes.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
With Lady Clare upon the hill ;
On which (for far the day was spent,)
The western sunbeams now were bent.
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
Could plain their distant comrades view :
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
" Unworthy office here to stay !
No hope of gilded spurs to-day. —
But see ! look up — on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,

As down the hill they broke ;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march ; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come. —
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close. —
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust ;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air ;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long looked the anxious squires ; their eye
Could in the darkness naught descry.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast ;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears ;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave

Floating like foam upon the wave ;
But naught distinct they see :
Wide raged the battle on the plain ;
Spears shook, and falchions flashed amain ;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly :
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight ;
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch man,
And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntley, and with Home.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle ;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied,
'Twas vain : — But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheered Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell ;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew

Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky !
A Home ! a Gordon ! was the cry :
Loud were the clanging blows ;
Advanced, — forced back, — now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose ;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It wavered mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear ;
"By heaven and all its saints I swear,
I will not see it lost !
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer, —
I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large, —
The rescued banner rose, —
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine tree, rooted from the ground,
It sunk among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too : — yet staid,
As loath to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rushed by ;

And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast,
To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone:
Perchance her reason stoops, or reels;
Perchance a courage, not her own,
Braces her mind to desperate tone. —
The scattered van of England wheels: —
She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there?"
They fly, or, maddened by despair,
Fight but to die, — "Is Wilton there?"
With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drenched with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strained the broken brand;
His arms were smeared with blood and sand,
Dragged from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion! . . . .
Young Blount his armor did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said — "By Saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped, —
And see, the deep cut on his head!

Good-night to Marmion." —
"Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:
He opes his eyes," said Eustace; "peace!"

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare: —
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon, — charge again!
Cry — 'Marmion to the rescue!' — Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again! —
Yet my last thought is England's — fly,
To Dacre bear my signet ring:
Tell him his squadrons up to bring. —
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie;
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield:
Edmund is down: — my life is reft;
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire, —
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost. —
Must I bid twice? — hence, varlets! fly!
Leave Marmion here alone — to die."
They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmured, "Is there none,

Of all my halls have nursed,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst ! "

O, woman ! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made ;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou ! —
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the Baron's casque, the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran :
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears ;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stooped her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew ;
For oozing from the mountain's side,
Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn ! — behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above, some half-worn letters say,
Drink . weary . pilgrim . drink . and . pray.
For . the . kind . soul . of . Sybil . Gray.
Who . built . this . cross . and . well.

She filled the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A Monk supporting Marmion's head;
A pious man whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
And, as she stooped his brow to lave —
"Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
"Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"
Then, as remembrance rose —
"Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine to spare;
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!" —
"Alas!" she said, "the while, —
O, think of your immortal weal!
In vain for Constance is your zeal;
She —— died at Holy Isle."
Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound;
Though in the action burst the tide
In torrents from his wounded side.
"Then it was truth," he said — "I knew
That the dark presage must be true. —
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire and dying groan,

And priests slain on the altar stone
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be! — this dizzy trance —
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand!
A sinful heart makes feeble hand."
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling Monk.

With fruitless labor, Clara bound,
And strove to stanch the gushing wound:
The Monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear,
For that she ever sung,
"*In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,*
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!"
So the notes rung; —
"Avoid thee, Fiend! — with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand! —
O, look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;
O, think on faith and bliss! —
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this."
The war that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,

And — STANLEY! was the cry; —
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye :
With dying hand, above his head,
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted " Victory ! —
Charge, Chester, charge ! On, Stanley, on ! "
Were the last words of Marmion.

By this though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their King,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vaward wing,
Where Huntley, and where Home ?
O for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died !
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride !
In vain the wish — for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,

Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.
"O, Lady," cried the Monk, "away!"
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair,
Of Tillmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hailed,
In headlong charge their horse assailed;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.

Then skillful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands ;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know ;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disordered, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land ;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong :
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield !

Day dawns upon the mountain's side : —
There, Scotland ! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one :
The sad survivors all are gone. —
View not that corpse mistrustfully,

Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high,
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
  Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
  May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
  And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clenched within his manly hand,
  Beseemed the Monarch slain.
But, O! how changed since yon blithe night!—
Gladly I turn me from the sight,
  Unto my tale again.

Short is my tale: — Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile;
And there, beneath the southern aisle,
A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear,
(Now vainly for its site you look;
'Twas levelled, when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral stormed and took;
But, thanks to Heaven, and good Saint Chad!
A guerdon meet the spoiler had!)
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,

His hands to heaven upraised;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods, a peasant swain
Followed his lord to Flodden plain, —
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as "wede away:"
Sore wounded, Sybil's Cross he spied,
And dragged him to its foot, and died,
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripped and gashed the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en;
And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,
The lowly woodsman took the room.

Less easy task it were, to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone;
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple Cross of Sybil Gray,
And broke her font of stone;
But yet out from the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye

The memorable field descry;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair;
Nor dream they sit upon the grave
That holds the bones of Marmion brave. —
When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune, and be still.
If ever, in temptation strong,
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong;
If ever devious step thus trod,
Still led thee further from the road;
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb;
But say, "He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right."

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself,
That, all through Flodden's dismal night,
Wilton was foremost in the fight;
That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
'Twas Wilton mounted him again;
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hewed
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood:
Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all;
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his rank and lands again;

And charged his old paternal shield
With bearings won on Flodden Field.
Nor sing I to that simple maid,
To whom it must in terms be said,
That King and kinsmen did agree,
To bless fair Clara's constancy;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state;
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny, passed the joke:
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
And Catherine's hand the stocking threw;
And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
"Love they like Wilton and like Clare!"

THE BATTLE OF THE LAKE REGILLUS

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

A Lay sung at the Feast of Castor and Pollux on the Ides of Quintilis, in the Year of the City CCCCLI

I

Ho, trumpets, sound a war-note !
Ho, lictors, clear the way !
The knights will ride, in all their pride,
Along the streets to-day.
To-day the doors and windows
Are hung with garlands all,
From Castor in the Forum
To Mars without the wall.
Each knight is robed in purple,
With olive each is crowned ;
A gallant war-horse under each
Paws haughtily the ground.
While flows the Yellow River,
While stands the Sacred Hill,
The proud ides of Quintilis
Shall have such honor still.
Gay are the Martian calends,
December's nones are gay ;
But the proud ides, when the squadron rides,
Shall be Rome's whitest day.

II

Unto the Great Twin Brethren
We keep this solemn feast.
Swift, swift, the Great Twin Brethren
Came spurring from the east.
They came o'er wild Parthenius
Tossing in waves of pine,
O'er Cirrha's dome, o'er Adria's foam,
O'er purple Apennine,
From where with flutes and dances
Their ancient mansion rings
In lordly Lacedæmon,
The city of two kings,
To where, by Lake Regillus,
Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum,
Was fought the glorious fight.

III

Now on the place of slaughter
Are cots and sheepfolds seen,
And rows of vines, and fields of wheat,
And apple-orchards green ;
The swine crush the big acorns
That fall from Corne's oaks ;
Upon the turf by the Fair Fount
The reapers' pottage smokes.
The fisher baits his angle,
The hunter twangs his bow ;

Little they think on those strong limbs
That molder deep below.
Little they think how sternly
That day the trumpets pealed;
How in the slippery swamp of blood
Warrior and war-horse reeled;
How wolves came with fierce gallop,
And crows on eager wings,
To tear the flesh of captains,
And peck the eyes of kings;
How thick the dead lay scattered
Under the Porcian height;
How through the gates of Tusculum
Raved the wild stream of flight;
And how the Lake Regillus
Bubbled with crimson foam,
What time the Thirty Cities
Came forth to war with Rome.

IV

But, Roman, when thou standest
Upon that holy ground,
Look thou with heed on the dark rock
That girds the dark lake round.
So shalt thou see a hoof-mark
Stamped deep into the flint;
It was no hoof of mortal steed
That made so strange a dint.
There to the Great Twin Brethren
Vow thou thy vows, and pray

That they, in tempest and in fight,
Will keep thy head alway.

V

Since last the Great Twin Brethren
Of mortal eyes were seen,
Have years gone by an hundred
And fourscore and thirteen.
That summer a Virginius
Was Consul first in place;
The second was stout Aulus,
Of the Posthumian race.
The herald of the Latines
From Gabii came in state;
The herald of the Latines
Passed through Rome's Eastern Gate:
The herald of the Latines
Did in our Forum stand;
And there he did his office,
A scepter in his hand:

VI

"Hear, Senators and people
Of the good town of Rome!
The Thirty Cities charge you
To bring the Tarquins home;
And if ye still be stubborn
To work the Tarquins wrong,
The Thirty Cities warn you,
Look that your walls be strong."

VII

Then spake the Consul Aulus —
He spake a bitter jest —
"Once the jays sent a message
Unto the eagle's nest :
Now yield thou up thine eyrie
Unto the carrion-kite,
Or come forth valiantly and face
The jays in deadly fight. —
Forth looked in wrath the eagle ;
And carrion-kite and jay,
Soon as they saw his beak and claw,
Fled screaming far away."

VIII

The herald of the Latines
Hath hied him back in state ;
The Fathers of the city
Are met in high debate.
Then spake the elder Consul,
An ancient man and wise :
"Now hearken, Conscript Fathers,
To that which I advise.
In seasons of great peril
'Tis good that one bear sway ;
Then choose we a Dictator,
Whom all men shall obey.
Camerium knows how deeply
The sword of Aulus bites,

And all our city calls him
The man of seventy fights.
Then let him be Dictator
For six months, and no more,
And have a Master of the Knights
And axes twenty-four."

IX

So Aulus was Dictator,
The man of seventy fights ;
He made Æbutius Elva
His Master of the Knights.
On the third morn thereafter,
At dawning of the day,
Did Aulus and Æbutius
Set forth with their array.
Sempronius Atratinus
Was left in charge at home,
With boys and with gray-headed men
To keep the walls of Rome.
Hard by the Lake Regillus
Our camp was pitched at night ;
Eastward a mile the Latines lay,
Under the Porcian height.
Far over hill and valley
Their mighty host was spread,
And with their thousand watch-fires
The midnight sky was red.

X

Up rose the golden morning
Over the Porcian height,
The proud ides of Quintilis
Marked evermore with white.
Not without secret trouble
Our bravest saw the foes ;
For girt by threescore thousand spears
The thirty standards rose.
From every warlike city
That boasts the Latian name,
Foredoomed to dogs and vultures,
That gallant army came :
From Sętia's purple vineyards,
From Norba's ancient wall,
From the white streets of Tusculum,
The proudest town of all ;
From where the Witch's Fortress
O'erhangs the dark blue seas ;
From the still glassy lake that sleeps
Beneath Aricia's trees —
Those trees in whose dim shadow
The ghastly priest doth reign,
The priest who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain ;
From the drear banks of Ufens,
Where flights of marsh-fowl play,
And buffaloes lie wallowing
Through the hot summer's day ;
From the gigantic watch-towers,

No work of earthly men,
Whence Cora's sentinels o'erlook
The never-ending fen ;
From the Laurentian jungle,
The wild hog's reedy home ;
From the green steeps whence Anio leaps
In floods of snow-white foam.

XI

Aricia, Cora, Norba,
Velitræ, with the might
Of Setia and of Tusculum,
Were marshaled on the right.
Their leader was Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name :
Upon his head a helmet
Of red gold shone like flame ;
High on a gallant charger
Of dark gray hue he rode ;
Over his gilded armor
A vest of purple flowed,
Woven in the land of sunrise
By Syria's dark-browed daughters,
And by the sails of Carthage brought
Far o'er the southern waters.

XII

Lavinium and Laurentum
Had on the left their post,

With all the banners of the marsh,
And banners of the coast.
Their leader was false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame ;
With restless pace and haggard face
To his last field he came.
Men said he saw strange visions
Which none beside might see,
And that strange sounds were in his ears
Which none might hear but he.
A woman fair and stately,
But pale as are the dead,
Oft through the watches of the night
Sat spinning by his bed ;
And as she plied the distaff,
In a sweet voice and low,
She sang of great old houses
And fights fought long ago.
So spun she and so sang she
Until the east was gray,
Then pointed to her bleeding breast,
And shrieked, and fled away.

XIII

But in the center thickest
Were ranged the shields of foes,
And from the center loudest
The cry of battle rose.
There Tibur marched, and Pedum,
Beneath proud Tarquin's rule,

And Ferentinum of the rock,
  And Gabii of the pool.
There rode the Volscian succors;
  There, in a dark stern ring,
The Roman exiles gathered close.
  Around the ancient king.
Though white as Mount Soracte
  When winter nights are long
His beard flowed down o'er mail and belt,
  His heart and hand were strong;
Under his hoary eyebrows
  Still flashed forth quenchless rage;
And if the lance shook in his gripe,
  'Twas more with hate than age.
Close at his side was Titus
  On an Apulian steed —
Titus, the youngest Tarquin,
  Too good for such a breed.

XIV

Now on each side the leaders
  Gave signal for the charge;
And on each side the footmen
  Strode on with lance and targe;
And on each side the horsemen
  Struck their spurs deep in gore,
And front to front the armies
  Met with a mighty roar;

And under that great battle
The earth with blood was red;
And, like the Pomptine fog at morn,
The dust hung overhead;
And louder still and louder
Rose from the darkened field
The braying of the war-horns,
The clang of sword and shield,
The rush of squadrons sweeping
Like whirlwinds o'er the plain,
The shouting of the slayers,
And screeching of the slain.

XV

False Sextus rode out foremost,
His look was high and bold;
His corselet was of bison's hide,
Plated with steel and gold.
As glares the famished eagle
From the Digentian rock
On a choice lamb that bounds alone
Before Bandusia's flock,
Herminius glared on Sextus
And came with eagle speed,
Herminius on black Auster,
Brave champion on brave steed;
In his right hand the broadsword
That kept the bridge so well,
And on his helm the crown he won
When proud Fidenæ fell.

Woe to the maid whose lover
Shall cross his path to-day !
False Sextus saw and trembled,
And turned and fled away.
As turns, as flies, the woodman
In the Calabrian brake,
When through the reeds gleams the round eye
Of that fell speckled snake,
So turned, so fled, false Sextus,
And hid him in the rear,
Behind the dark Lavinian ranks
Bristling with crest and spear.

XVI

But far to north Æbutius,
The Master of the Knights,
Gave Tubero of Norba
To feed the Porcian kites.
Next under those red horse-hoofs
Flaccus of Setia lay ;
Better had he been pruning
Among his elms that day.
Mamilius saw the slaughter,
And tossed his golden crest,
And towards the Master of the Knights
Through the thick battle pressed.
Æbutius smote Mamilius
So fiercely on the shield
That the great lord of Tusculum
Well-nigh rolled on the field.

Mamilius smote Æbutius,
With a good aim and true,
Just where the neck and shoulder join,
And pierced him through and through:
And brave Æbutius Elva
Fell swooning to the ground,
But a thick wall of bucklers
Encompassed him around.
His clients from the battle
Bare him some little space,
And filled a helm from the dark lake
And bathed his brow and face;
And when at last he opened
His swimming eyes to light,
Men say the earliest word he spake
Was "Friends, how goes the fight?"

XVII

But meanwhile in the center
Great deeds of arms were wrought;
There Aulus the Dictator
And there Valerius fought.
Aulus with his good broadsword
A bloody passage cleared
To where, amidst the thickest foes,
He saw the long white beard.
Flat lighted that good broadsword
Upon proud Tarquin's head.
He dropped the lance, he dropped the reins;
He fell as fall the dead.

Down Aulus springs to slay him,
With eyes like coals of fire;
But faster Titus hath sprung down,
And hath bestrode his sire.
Latian captains, Roman knights,
Fast down to earth they spring,
And hand to hand they fight on foot
Around the ancient king.
First Titus gave tall Cæso
A death-wound in the face—
Tall Cæso was the bravest man
Of the brave Fabian race;
Aulus slew Rex of Gabii,
The priest of Juno's shrine;
Valerius smote down Julius,
Of Rome's great Julian line—
Julius, who left his mansion
High on the Velian hill,
And through all turns of weal and woe
Followed proud Tarquin still.
Now right across proud Tarquin
A corpse was Julius laid;
And Titus groaned with rage and grief,
And at Valerius made.
Valerius struck at Titus,
And lopped off half his crest;
But Titus stabbed Valerius
A span deep in the breast.
Like a mast snapped by the tempest,
Valerius reeled and fell.

Ah! woe is me for the good house
That loves the people well!
Then shouted loud the Latines,
And with one rush they bore
The struggling Romans backward
Three lances' length and more;
And up they took proud Tarquin,
And laid him on a shield,
And four strong yeomen bare him,
Still senseless, from the field.

XVIII

But fiercer grew the fighting
Around Valerius dead;
For Titus dragged him by the foot,
And Aulus by the head.
"On, Latines, on!" quoth Titus,
"See how the rebels fly!"
"Romans, stand firm!" quoth Aulus,
"And win this fight or die!
They must not give Valerius
To raven and to kite;
For aye Valerius loathed the wrong,
And aye upheld the right;
And for your wives and babies
In the front rank he fell.
Now play the men for the good house
That loves the people well!"

XIX

Then tenfold round the body
The roar of battle rose,
Like the roar of a burning forest
When a strong north wind blows.
Now backward and now forward
Rocked furiously the fray,
Till none could see Valerius,
And none wist where he lay.
For shivered arms and ensigns
Were heaped there in a mound,
And corpses stiff and dying men
That writhed and gnawed the ground,
And wounded horses kicking
And snorting purple foam;
Right well did such a couch befit
A Consular of Rome.

XX

But north looked the Dictator;
North looked he long and hard,
And spake to Caius Cossus,
The Captain of his Guard:
"Caius, of all the Romans,
Thou hast the keenest sight;
Say, what through yonder storm of dust
Comes from the Latian right?"

XXI

Then answered Caius Cossus:
"I see an evil sight;
The banner of proud Tusculum
Comes from the Latian right.
I see the plumed horsemen;
And far before the rest
I see the dark gray charger,
I see the purple vest;
I see the golden helmet
That shines far off like flame;
So ever rides Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name."

XXII

"Now hearken, Caius Cossus:
Spring on thy horse's back;
Ride as the wolves of Apennine
Were all upon thy track;
Haste to our southward battle,
And never draw thy rein
Until thou find Herminius,
And bid him come amain."

XXIII

So Aulus spake, and turned him
Again to that fierce strife;
And Caius Cossus mounted,
And rode for death and life.

Loud clanged beneath his horse-hoofs
The helmets of the dead,
And many a curdling pool of blood
Splashed him from heel to head.
So came he far to southward,
Where fought the Roman host
Against the banners of the marsh
And banners of the coast.
Like corn before the sickle
The stout Lavinians fell,
Beneath the edge of the true sword
That kept the bridge so well.

XXIV

"Herminius, Aulus greets thee;
He bids thee come with speed
To help our central battle,
For sore is there our need.
There wars the youngest Tarquin,
And there the Crest of Flame,
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.
Valerius hath fallen fighting
In front of our array,
And Aulus of the seventy fields
Alone upholds the day."

XXV

Herminius beat his bosom,
But never a word he spake.

He clapped his hand on Auster's mane,
He gave the reins a shake;
Away, away, went Auster,
Like an arrow from the bow —
Black Auster was the fleetest steed
From Aufidus to Po.

XXVI

Right glad were all the Romans
Who, in that hour of dread,
Against great odds bare up the war
Around Valerius dead,
When from the south the cheering
Rose with a mighty swell:
"Herminius comes, Herminius,
Who kept the bridge so well!"

XXVII

Mamilius spied Herminius,
And dashed across the way:
"Herminius, I have sought thee
Through many a bloody day.
One of us two, Herminius,
Shall never more go home,
I will lay on for Tusculum,
And lay thou on for Rome!"

XXVIII

All round them paused the battle,
While met in mortal fray

The Roman and the Tusculan,
The horses black and gray.
Herminius smote Mamilius
Through breastplate and through breast,
And fast flowed out the purple blood
Over the purple vest.
Mamilius smote Herminius
Through headpiece and through head;
And side by side those chiefs of pride
Together fell down dead.
Down fell they dead together
In a great lake of gore;
And still stood all who saw them fall
While men might count a score.

XXIX

Fast, fast, with heels wild spurning,
The dark gray charger fled;
He burst through ranks of fighting men,
He sprang o'er heaps of dead.
His bridle far outstreaming,
His flanks all blood and foam,
He sought the southern mountains,
The mountains of his home.
The pass was steep and rugged,
The wolves they howled and whined;
But he ran like a whirlwind up the pass,
And he left the wolves behind.
Through many a startled hamlet

Thundered his flying feet;
He rushed through the gate of Tusculum,
He rushed up the long white street;
He rushed by tower and temple,
And paused not from his race
Till he stood before his master's door
In the stately market place.
And straightway round him gathered
A pale and trembling crowd;
And, when they knew him, cries of rage
Brake forth, and wailing loud;
And women rent their tresses
For their great prince's fall;
And old men girt on their old swords,
And went to man the wall.

XXX

But, like a graven image,
Black Auster kept his place,
And ever wistfully he looked
Into his master's face.
The raven mane that daily,
With pats and fond caresses,
The young Herminia washed and combed,
And twined in even tresses,
And decked with colored ribbons
From her own gay attire,
Hung sadly o'er her father's corpse
In carnage and in mire.
Forth with a shout sprang Titus,

And seized black Auster's rein.
Then Aulus sware a fearful oath,
And ran at him amain:
"The furies of thy brother
With me and mine abide,
If one of your accursed house
Upon black Auster ride!"
As on an Alpine watch-tower
From heaven comes down the flame,
Full on the neck of Titus
The blade of Aulus came;
And out the red blood spouted
In a wide arch and tall,
As spouts a fountain in the court
Of some rich Capuan's hall.
The knees of all the Latines
Were loosened with dismay
When dead, on dead Herminius,
The bravest Tarquin lay.

XXXI

And Aulus the Dictator
Stroked Auster's raven mane,
With heed he looked unto the girths,
With heed unto the rein:
"Now bear me well, black Auster,
Into yon thick array,
And thou and I will have revenge
For thy good lord this day."

XXXII

So spake he, and was buckling
Tighter black Auster's band,
When he was aware of a princely pair
That rode at his right hand.
So like they were, no mortal
Might one from other know;
White as snow their armor was,
Their steeds were white as snow.
Never on earthly anvil
Did such rare armor gleam,
And never did such gallant steeds
Drink of an earthly stream.

XXXIII

And all who saw them trembled,
And pale grew every cheek;
And Aulus the Dictator
Scarce gathered voice to speak:
"Say by what name men call you?
What city is your home?
And wherefore ride ye in such guise
Before the ranks of Rome?"

XXXIV

"By many names men call us,
In many lands we dwell:
Well Samothracia knows us,
Cyrene knows us well;
Our house in gay Tarentum

Is hung each morn with flowers ;
High o'er the masts of Syracuse
Our marble portal towers ;
But by the proud Eurotas
Is our dear native home ;
And for the right we come to fight
Before the ranks of Rome."

XXXV

So answered those strange horsemen,
And each couched low his spear ;
And forthwith all the ranks of Rome
Were bold and of good cheer ;
And on the thirty armies
Came wonder and affright,
And Ardea wavered on the left,
And Cora on the right.
"Rome to the charge!" cried Aulus ;
"The foe begins to yield !
Charge for the hearth of Vesta !
Charge for the Golden Shield !
Let no man stop to plunder,
But slay, and slay, and slay ;
The gods, who live forever,
Are on our side to-day."

XXXVI

Then the fierce trumpet-flourish
From earth to heaven arose ;

The kites know well the long stern swell
That bids the Romans close.
Then the good sword of Aulus
Was lifted up to slay ;
Then, like a crag down Apennine,
Rushed Auster through the fray
But under those strange horsemen
Still thicker lay the slain,
And after those strange horses
Black Auster toiled in vain.
Behind them Rome's long battle
Came rolling on the foe,
Ensigns dancing wild above,
Blades all in line below.
So comes the Po in flood-time
Upon the Celtic plain ;
So comes the squall, blacker than night,
Upon the Adrian main.
Now, by our sire Quirinus,
It was a goodly sight
To see the thirty standards
Swept down the tide of flight !
So flies the spray of Adria
When the black squall doth blow ;
So corn-sheaves in the flood-time
Spin down the whirling Po.
False Sextus to the mountains
Turned first his horse's head ;
And fast fled Ferentinum,
And fast Lanuvium fled.

The horsemen of Nomentum
  Spurred hard out of the fray;
The footmen of Velitræ
  Threw shield and spear away.
And underfoot was trampled,
  Amidst the mud and gore,
The banner of proud Tusculum,
  That never stooped before;
And down went Flavius Faustus,
  Who led his stately ranks
From where the apple-blossoms wave
  On Anio's echoing banks;
And Tullus of Arpinum,
  Chief of the Volscian aids,
And Metius with the long fair curls,
  The love of Anxur's maids;
And the white head of Vulso,
  The great Arician seer;
And Nepos of Laurentum,
  The hunter of the deer;
And in the back false Sextus
  Felt the good Roman steel,
And wriggling in the dust he died,
  Like a worm beneath the wheel;
And fliers and pursuers
  Were mingled in a mass;
And far away the battle
  Went roaring through the pass.

XXXVII

Sempronius Atratinus
Sat in the Eastern Gate,
Beside him were three Fathers,
Each in his chair of state —
Fabius, whose nine stout grandsons
That day were in the field,
And Manlius, eldest of the Twelve
Who keep the Golden Shield ;
And Sergius, the High Pontiff,
For wisdom far renowned —
In all Etruria's colleges
Was no such pontiff found.
And all around the portal,
And high above the wall,
Stood a great throng of people,
But sad and silent all ;
Young lads and stooping elders
That might not bear the mail,
Matrons with lips that quivered,
And maids with faces pale.
Since the first gleam of daylight,
Sempronius had not ceased
To listen for the rushing
Of horse-hoofs from the east.
The mist of eve was rising,
The sun was hastening down,
When he was aware of a princely pair
Fast pricking towards the town.
So like they were, man never

Saw twins so like before ;
Red with gore their armor was,
Their steeds were red with gore.

XXXVIII

"Hail to the great Asylum !
Hail to the hill-tops seven !
Hail to the fire that burns for aye,
And the shield that fell from heaven !
This day, by Lake Regillus,
Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum
Was fought a glorious fight.
To-morrow your Dictator
Shall bring in triumph home
The spoils of thirty cities
To deck the shrines of Rome ! "

XXXIX

Then burst from that great concourse
A shout that shook the towers,
And some ran north, and some ran south,
Crying, "The day is ours ! "
But on rode these strange horsemen
With slow and lordly pace,
And none who saw their bearing
Durst ask their name or race.
On rode they to the Forum,
While laurel boughs and flowers,

From house-tops and from windows,
Fell on their crests in showers.
When they drew nigh to Vesta,
They vaulted down amain,
And washed their horses in the well
That springs by Vesta's fane.
And straight again they mounted,
And rode to Vesta's door;
Then, like a blast, away they passed,
And no man saw them more.

XL

And all the people trembled,
And pale grew every cheek;
And Sergius the High Pontiff
Alone found voice to speak:
"The gods who live forever
Have fought for Rome to-day!
These be the Great Twin Brethren
To whom the Dorians pray.
Back comes the chief in triumph
Who in the hour of fight
Hath seen the Great Twin Brethren
In harness on his right.
Safe comes the ship to haven,
Through billows and through gales,
If once the Great Twin Brethren
Sit shining on the sails.
Wherefore they washed their horses
In Vesta's holy well,

Wherefore they rode to Vesta's door,
I know, but may not tell.
Here, hard by Vesta's temple,
Build we a stately dome
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
Who fought so well for Rome.
And when the months returning
Bring back this day of fight,
The proud ides of Quintilis,
Marked evermore with white,
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
Let all the people throng,
With chaplets and with offerings,
With music and with song;
And let the doors and windows
Be hung with garlands all,
And let the knights be summoned
To Mars without the wall;
Thence let them ride in purple
With joyous trumpet-sound,
Each mounted on his war-horse
And each with olive crowned,
And pass in solemn order
Before the sacred dome
Where dwell the Great Twin Brethren
Who fought so well for Rome."

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